

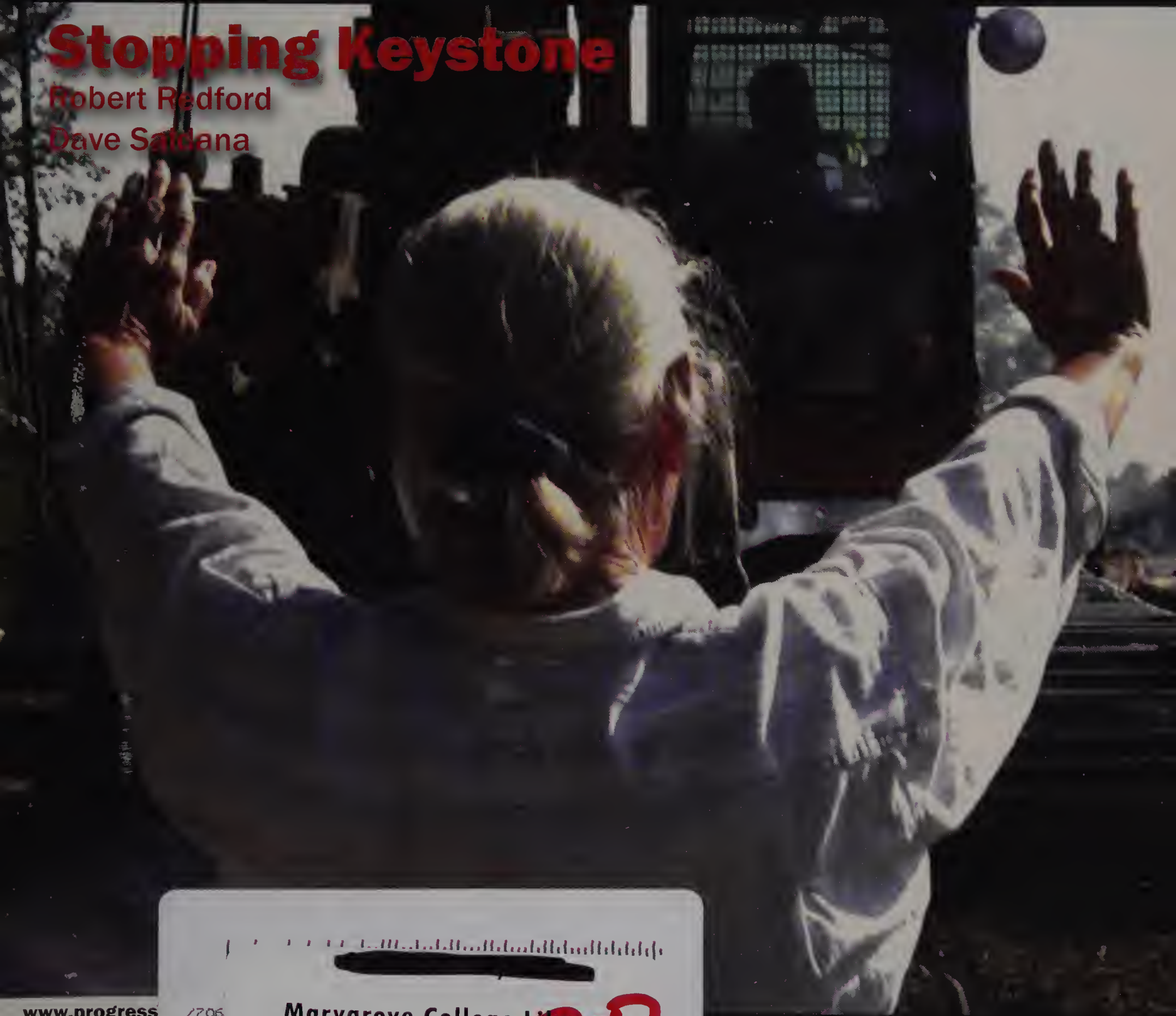
POETRY BY WENDELL BERRY
SCOTT WALKER EXPOSED
KATE CLINTON ON COMEDY'S CRASS CEILING

The Progressive

April 2014

Stopping Keystone

Robert Redford
Dave Saldana



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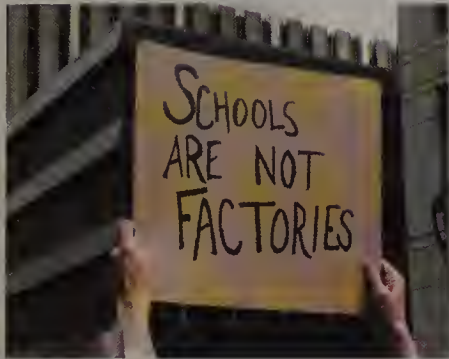
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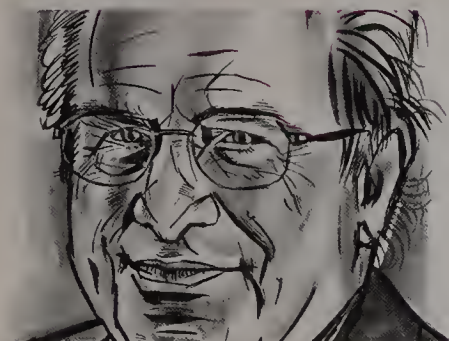
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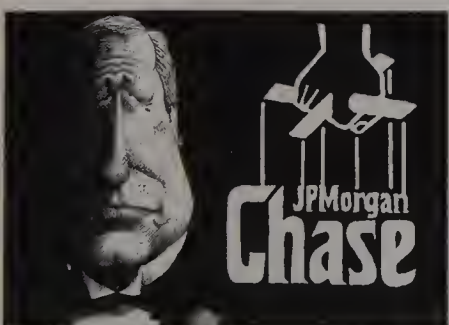
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Cover photo: Eleanor Fairchild, standing in front of Keystone XL construction machinery on her family farm outside Winnsboro, Texas. Photo courtesy TarSandsBlockade.org

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Editor's Note Ruth Conniff

The Walker File

When an appeals court in Madison, Wisconsin, released thousands of pages of secret e-mails by Scott Walker's "inner circle," *The Progressive* immediately posted the documents online and began sifting through them to see what we would find.

We found a lot of stories, both large and small. (See Matthew Rothschild's article on page 29.)

Governor Walker, widely viewed as a Republican Presidential prospect for 2016, has been having some trouble answering questions about his involvement in illegal campaign work over a secret network in his office when he was Milwaukee County executive. That illegal work has resulted so far in the conviction of six of his closest aides and associates for fifteen felonies and two misdemeanors. While the governor himself was not charged in the first investigation (which the big document release came from), there is a second investigation that may yet pose bigger problems for him.

Just the fact that Walker participated in conversations dealing with campaign and public work on a secret e-mail network is, on its face, of dubious legality.

But most of all, what the e-mails show is Walker's total contempt for public service and for the constituents he was elected to serve.

Back when Walker first rammed through Act 10, the law that ended most collective bargaining rights for most public employees in Wisconsin, it was clear that he does not hold teachers or other public employees in high regard. Nor does he care much for funding for public services. He has made historic cuts to Wisconsin's once-great public school system and has slashed state aid to local governments.

But the secret e-mails from what one staffer called Walker's "inner circle" show how Walker hijacked county

government and put political hacks in charge of critical services.

These same Walker loyalists mocked the constituents who depended on them.

Here is a joke Kelly Rindfleisch, Walker's deputy chief of staff, received in an e-mail: "This morning I went to sign my Dogs up for welfare. At first the lady said, 'Dogs are not eligible to draw welfare.' So I explained to her that my Dogs are mixed in color, unemployed, lazy, can't speak English and have no frigging clue who their Daddys are. They expect me to feed them, provide them with housing and medical care, and feel guilty because they are dogs. So she looked in her policy book to see what it takes to qualify. My Dogs get their first checks Friday."

"This is so true!" Rindfleisch responded.

And it wasn't just racist jokes.

When news broke about a rash of sexual assaults at the county mental health facility, Rindfleisch wrote flipantly about problems with bad press about "our looney bin." Walker himself drafted talking points that suggested minimizing the problem and defending the policy of housing males and females together.

"We need to continue to keep me out of the story," he added.

After mental patient Cynthia Anszak starved to death at the same facility, Walker's staff discussed slowing down settlement talks with the woman's elderly parents in order to keep the story out of the press. "No one cares about crazy people," Rindfleisch wrote.

Conducting politics on taxpayer time may sound like a dry charge. But the nasty e-mails that came out of the "inner circle" e-mail network show why we should care. These people didn't just violate the public trust, they spit on it. ♦

No Comment

Calling Margaret Atwood

Virginia Republican state senator Steve Martin had this advice for women. “Once a child does exist in your womb,” he wrote on Facebook in February, “I’m not going to assume a right to kill it just because the child’s host (some refer to them as mothers) doesn’t want it.”



Live Free and Commit Suicide

Libertarian state representative George Lambert of New Hampshire was booed in the capitol when he opposed a bill in February that would have required public schools to provide suicide prevention education. “The ultimate question of liberty is ‘Do You Own Your Own Life,’ ” he wrote on Facebook. “I was booed at the statehouse today for asking ‘If we pass this bill, what will happen to a young person who is considering suicide?’ If we are going to ‘lock them up and deny them liberty,’ do they actually own their own lives? . . . Liberty is complicated.”

Too Much of a Good Thing

Colorado Republican state senator Bernie Herpin, who replaced one of the legislators who was recalled after voting in favor of gun control, found something positive to say about the fact that James Holmes used a high-capacity magazine when he killed twelve people in a theater in Aurora, Colorado, in 2012. “As it turned out, that was maybe a good thing that he had a 100-round magazine, because it jammed,” Herpin said, according to KDVR. “If he had instead had four, five, six fifteen-round magazines, no telling how much damage he could have done until a good guy with a gun showed up.”

Don’t Ride Your Bike in This County

Thomas Barraga, a Republican lawmaker in Suffolk County, New York, showed a remarkable lack of compassion in responding to a seventeen-year-old who wrote him about his mother, who had a concussion after being hit by a car: “My personal feeling is that no one who lives in our hamlet or for that matter in Suffolk County should ever ride a bicycle or a motorcycle,” he wrote, according to *Newsday*. “Suffolk County is a suburban automobile community—drivers expect to see other drivers on the road, not bicyclists and motorcyclists.”

Readers are invited to submit No Comment items. Please send original clippings or photocopies and give the name and date of publication. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

Those Radical Girl Scouts

Jane Chastain, writing in *World News Daily*, urged her readers to spurn the Girl Scouts. She asked them if they had the guts “to say no to a precious little girl, looking up at you with those beautiful, big, expectant eyes.” The reason: the “radical agenda” of the Girl Scouts. Chastain said the Girl Scouts partners with Planned Parenthood, which Planned Parenthood denies. Chastain also said that the Girl Scouts fosters lesbianism.

Something in the Air in Texas

Tea Party Republican Chris Mapp of Texas, who challenged Senator John Cornyn in a primary, told the editorial board of *The Dallas Morning News* that “ranchers should be allowed to

shoot on sight anyone illegally crossing the border on to their land, referred to such people as ‘wetbacks,’ and called the President a ‘socialist son of a bitch.’ ” Mapp later defended his racial slur, claiming it is as “normal as breathing air in South Texas.”



Here’s to Plutocracy

Billionaire venture capitalist Tom Perkins told *Fortune’s* Adam Lashinsky that he favored voting by property owners only, and the more property you own and pay taxes on, the more votes you get. “It should be like a corporation,” he said. “You pay a million dollars in taxes, you get a million votes.”



Another Ignorant Nazi Analogy

The spokesman for the American Family Association, Bryan Fischer, on February 24 let loose a tirade against what he called “the homosexual lobby,” referring to those who opposed Arizona’s discriminatory legislation as “jackbooted homofascist thugs.” He added: “We are going to have to choose between homosexuality and religious freedom, because we can’t have both.” And he warned that we were approaching Nazi Germany.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STUART GOLDENBERG

Letters to the Editor

Run, Bernie, Run!

It is time for Bernie Sanders to run for the Presidency of the United States (Bill Fletcher Jr., "Should Bernie Run?" February issue). He is a hard-working and brilliant socialist.

Some people say that the word "socialist" cannot be used to any political advantage. Don't believe it. America today is fraught with grave social problems, and we need a socialist to fix them. Young people know this, and they are not opposed to such principles.

Still, I think Senator Sanders should run as a Democrat. I am a socialist at heart, and I always vote the Democratic ticket.

Republicans believe that the private sector should dictate government policy. They do not believe the federal government should serve the people, or improve the educational system, or take care of public health, or rid us of prejudice with regard to race, sex, class, or anything else. In short, they don't believe that we should, through our elected representatives, "promote the general welfare," as we are constitutionally obliged to do.

Sanders understands this obligation. He is a very intelligent man, and he appreciates the role of government. Let's let him govern.

*Edward Spicer
West Palm Beach, Florida*

As a lifetime Democrat and one who is very progressive in most views, I would welcome Senator Bernie Sanders into the Presidential primaries. The arguments that he would present would be very healthy for the Democratic Party and would expose Hillary Clinton on the issues that trouble most progressives. It would be great to have Sanders bringing up subjects such as single-payer health care and reminding her that most of us are tired of this country injecting itself in the affairs of countries all over the world.

But I abhor the idea of him running as a third-party candidate, as we would have the same thing we had back when Al Gore ran for President. The Democrats would again be damaged and would probably hand the Presidency to another George

W. Bush. I will never forgive Ralph Nader for gifting the Presidency to Bush for I believe that had he not run, the 9/11 disaster might well have been avoided and this country would never have invaded Iraq. I blame Nader as much as Bush for the shape this country is in today.

*Marlin Morris
Salem, Illinois*

Who Is the Real Wendy Davis?

In "Wendy Davis and the Battle for Texas" (February issue), Mary Tuma gives an account that differs from *Time* magazine's, which points out that Davis "blurred" her biography. According to *Time*, she exaggerated how long she spent in a mobile home and said she did so when she was nineteen, not twenty-one. *Time* also recounts her second husband's claim that Davis abandoned

him and her daughter the day after he paid off her Harvard bills.

The omissions in your story cause me to wonder about the veracity of other features in your magazine.

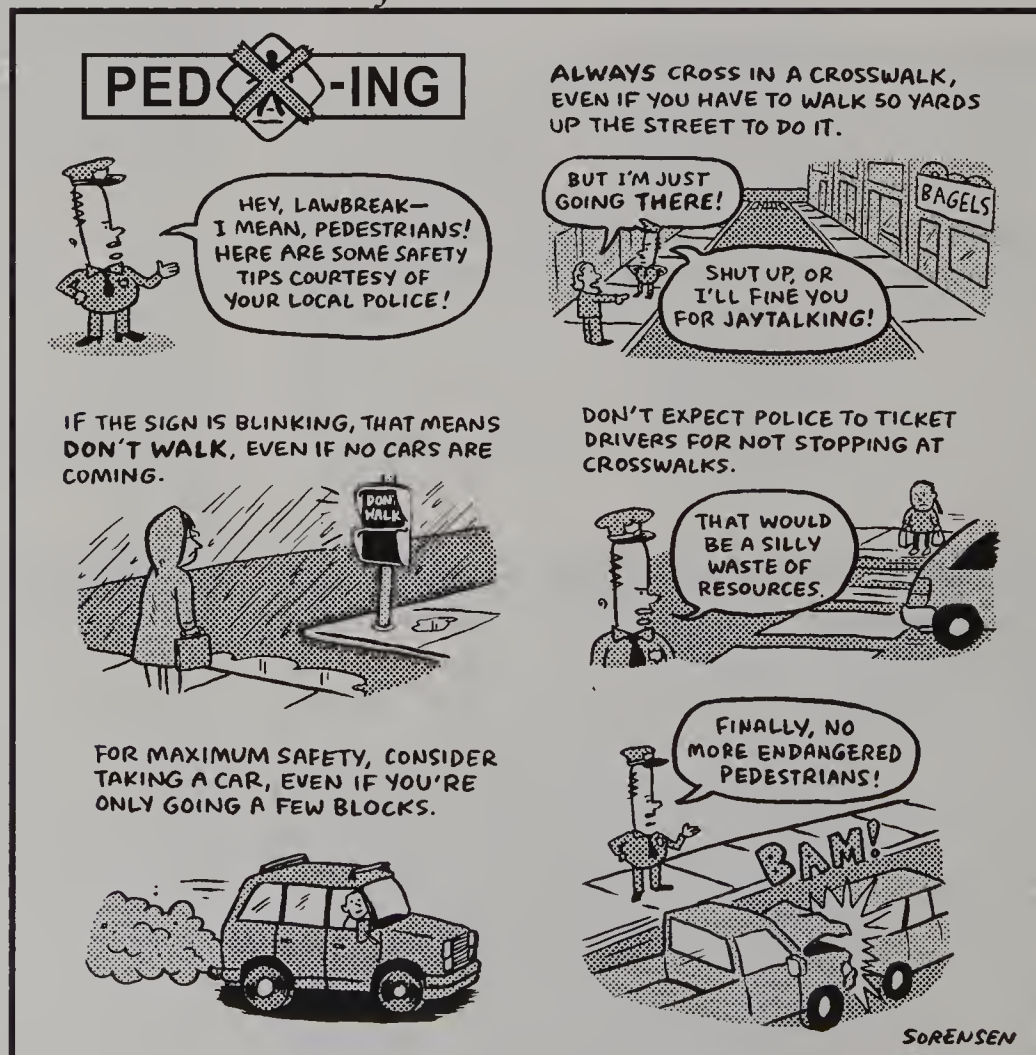
*Sandra M. Seymour
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin*

I am eighty-two, a retired economics professor at the University of Texas-Austin. I have been in politics since 1950. I have advised governors and Senators, as well as anti-poverty groups and civil rights activists, *The Texas Observer*, and the Democratic Party. This is to certify that my opinion is worth paying attention to.

Here it is: Mary Tuma's article on Wendy Davis is superb! Please congratulate her for me.

*Daniel Morgan
Austin, Texas*

SLOWPOKE © Jen Sorensen



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Rolling Back Voting Rights

Over the last several years, voter I.D. laws passed by state legislatures have been making it harder for poor people, students, the elderly, and minorities to vote.

Attorney General Eric Holder has compared these laws to the poll tax, which was created in the Jim Crow era to deliberately suppress the black vote in the South.

The suspicion that voter I.D. is a cynical effort by Republicans to make it hard for people who tend to vote for Democrats to participate in elections is magnified by the lack of evidence that in-person voter fraud is actually a problem.

Last year, a nationwide study of more than 2,000 cases of alleged election fraud between 2000 and 2012 showed that voter impersonation, which thirty-seven state legislatures had introduced laws to thwart, was “virtually nonexistent,” according to *The Washington Post*.

The investigation, conducted by the Carnegie-Knight Initiative, found only ten cases of alleged in-person voter impersonation over the twelve-year period. That’s one in fifteen million. And even those instances were just alleged.

Those facts have not stopped Tea Partiers from sending “election monitors” to guard polling places, looking for suspicious would-be voters in minority neighborhoods all over the United States. And it hasn’t stopped Republican legislators from passing laws that require voters to go to arduous lengths to prove they are who they say they are.

Because there is no general right to vote enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, the battle over this most fundamental aspect of citizenship is being fought at the state level.

“Over the past few years, half the states passed laws making it harder to vote,” Wendy Weiser of the Brennan Center for Justice wrote for *The Atlantic* in January. “Discrimination was a significant factor: Researchers from the University of Massachusetts

found that the states most likely to introduce and pass voting restrictions were those where minority and low-income turnout had increased most since the last presidential election.”

The repeal of a crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act has made things worse, as Weiser points out.

“Those states previously singled out for special oversight under the Voting Rights Act were among the worst offenders,” she noted. “The provision the Supreme Court neutered had been a significant weapon against discriminatory laws: In 2012 alone, it stopped more than fifteen discriminatory voting changes from going into effect, and deterred many more. Now it’s gone.”

At the end of February, the Wisconsin Supreme Court heard arguments on a voter I.D. law that Governor Scott Walker and his Republican cronies in the legislature rammed through.

The League of Women Voters and the Milwaukee chapter of the NAACP argued that the law deprives citizens of their fundamental right to vote.

The NAACP’s attorney Richard Saks pointed out to the court that there has not been a single case of voter impersonation charged in Wisconsin.

Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman replied that just because no one has been detected committing in-person voter fraud doesn’t mean it is not a problem.

“The conservative analysis of this is that theoretically there could be voter impersonation. And the fact that we’ve never found a single case [in Wisconsin] is evidence that there is voter impersonation, because that shows how hard it is to find,” says attorney Lester Pines, who represented the League of Women Voters.

“It’s ridiculous,” Pines said after the hearing. “We could pass a law that says aliens from outer space aren’t allowed to vote—then that problem would be taken care of.”

The harm caused by voter I.D. laws, by contrast, is very real. On the Wisconsin Supreme Court, both conservative and liberal justices seemed troubled by some of the points raised by the League of Women Voters and the NAACP.

Among the sticking points for the court’s conservative majority was the fact that the government will impose a fee on citizens before they can vote, since those who don’t have prop-



RICHARD BERGE

“Voter fraud is very rare, voter impersonation is nearly non-existent and much of the problems associated with alleged fraud in elections relates to unintentional mistakes by voters or election administrators.”

—“The Truth About Voter Fraud,” a report by the Brennan Center

er I.D. will have to pay the government to obtain a copy of their birth certificates.

"That bothers me," said Justice Patience Roggensack.

The Wisconsin Constitution expressly forbids the state legislature from passing any law that "impairs or destroys the right to vote."

Wisconsin's voter I.D. law, with its six very specific document requirements that voters must meet in order to prove their identity, significantly impairs some people's ability to vote.

A voter may not use a picture I.D. from the workplace, or a sworn affidavit that they are who they say they are. And the process to get the proper documentation can be onerous, requiring multiple trips to multiple government offices.

But, Justice David Prosser asked Pines, don't voters already have to present identification if they opt to register at the polls?

"No," Pines replied. A citizen can use a sworn affidavit, an electric bill, or other proof of age, residency, and citizenship to register and be entered into the voting rolls on Election Day. That person should not be forbidden to vote if he doesn't also have a different I.D. to prove he is not impersonating someone else.

Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson, a staunch and brilliant progressive, told Assistant Attorney General Clayton Kawski, who represented the state, about her father, a naturalized U.S. citizen who had lived in the United States since the 1920s and whose naturalization papers hung in a place of honor in their family home.

"He never had a driver's license. He was not born in the United States," Abrahamson said. In his country of origin, she added, it would be hard to find his birth certificate, if he even had one. "He was not of a favored religion," she observed, so it may not have existed.

"So how does he fit?" Abrahamson asked.

Kawski replied that Abrahamson's father was not relevant, since the argument was about legislative authority, not whether the law is fair.

"It shows to me that on its face this is a regulation that impairs or destroys the right to vote," Abrahamson rejoined.

Kawski replied that the statute does not discriminate. "It applies universally," he said.

Abrahamson noted that "the concept that everyone is treated equally" is not the same as nondiscrimination. "Everyone can sleep under the bridge or not sleep under the bridge. It may look quite equal, but it's not in its effects."

Kawski said, "That's not the test in this case."

Later in the argument, after a long discussion of the specific forms of I.D. voters must show, the chief justice broke in again:

"I keep coming back to my father," she said.

"Here's what I think I'd have to do" so he could vote, she

added, noting that he had never missed an election in his life. "I think I'd have to register him at the University of Wisconsin. If they would take him, I'd have to pay for a student I.D. card." She noted that her father, who never made much money, would have had trouble covering the costs, but she could have covered it for him.

"Or I could go to a court and ask the court to issue an order that he is who he says he is. It would cost a filing fee of about \$160, and I don't know if the court would do it. Would you accept a court order?" she asked Kawski.

"No, that would not be accepted," he replied.

Abrahamson: "Well, you are consistent."

Kawski: "Thank you."

Kawski went on with his argument before Justice Gableman, clearly troubled, broke in:

"So how can her father vote?"

The only way, Kawski allowed, was to "get a birth certificate."

"Certainly there are folks out there who would have trouble," he conceded, "but the vast majority can comply." "Ninety percent" was his estimate.

The state seemed to be arguing that depriving people of a fundamental constitutional right is all right, so long as it's only 10 percent of the populace.

"That really shows what this is all about," says Pines. "It's white privilege. It's not that it's conscious racism. The average upper middle class person doesn't have a clue what it means to be a poor working person who can't take off time to go to the DMV in the middle of the work day."

Still, the conservatives on the court were wrestling with a law that sets up significant bureaucratic hurdles to voting. At one point Justice Annette Ziegler asked Pines, "What about the right to bear arms?"

The question was such a head scratcher it took Pines several beats to answer. But it highlighted the trouble for an ideological conservative with an intrusive government regulation on a fundamental constitutional right.

The court set no deadline to rule. But there is at least a glimmer of hope that the conservative majority court will rule against their Republican allies in this case.

"If they do," says Pines, "it's a monumental political defeat for Scott Walker."

If they don't, Wisconsin will join more than half the states in making it harder for citizens to exercise their most fundamental rights in a democracy. ♦

**"In its majestic equality,
the law forbids rich and
poor alike to sleep under
bridges, beg in the streets
and steal loaves of bread."**

—*Anatole France*

—*Ruth Conniff*



STUDENTS PROTEST KXL PIPELINE IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE, MARCH 3, 2014. PHOTO BY ASSOCIATED PRESS/ /MANUEL BALCE CENETA

Students Arrested At White House Protesting Keystone

Police arrested hundreds of young people protesting the Keystone XL project on March 2. The demonstrators zip-tied themselves to the fence outside the White House, calling on President Obama to stop the controversial oil pipeline.

Protesters held signs that read: "There is no planet B." Some, wearing white jump suits and splattered with black ink, collapsed on a giant tarp that spread out over Pennsylvania Avenue like a giant oil spill.

"If the Democratic Party wants to keep our vote, they better make sure President Obama rejects that pipeline," Nick

Stracco, a twenty-three-year-old student at Tulane University in New Orleans, told a reporter from Reuters.

Student environmentalists planned the action, along with 350.org and the Energy Action Coaliton, to remind Obama that young voters care about climate change. They marched to the White House after holding a rally at Georgetown University, the site of Obama's speech announcing his plan to combat climate change last year.

For more information, go to 350.org.

Minimum Wage Protest at Wendy's

During the lunch rush on January 31 at a downtown Wendy's restaurant in New York City, picketers chanted "Get up! Get down! There's a revolution in this town!"

The protest, organized by 99 Pickets and Fight for 15 (referring to the demand for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage), was a show of support for fired Wendy's worker Rynetta Bennett, who lost her job after she began organizing campaigns for a \$15-an-hour wage and a union at Wendy's.

Bennett is one of thousands of fast-food workers who have been building the nationwide movement for livable wages and better conditions for exploited food service workers. Many of these employees have to go to work sick or lose their jobs, and they rely on food stamps to feed their own families. The corporations that run fast food restaurants rake in massive profits and are lobbying, through the National Restaurant Association, to prevent an increase in the minimum wage.



NEW YORK CITY; JANUARY 31, 2014; PHOTO BY ANNE PRUDEN, WORKERS WORLD

Artists Take On the Guggenheim

On the evening of February 22, more than 40 artists and activists went to the Guggenheim Museum in New York City to draw attention to the abysmal working conditions in Abu Dhabi, where the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is about to be built.

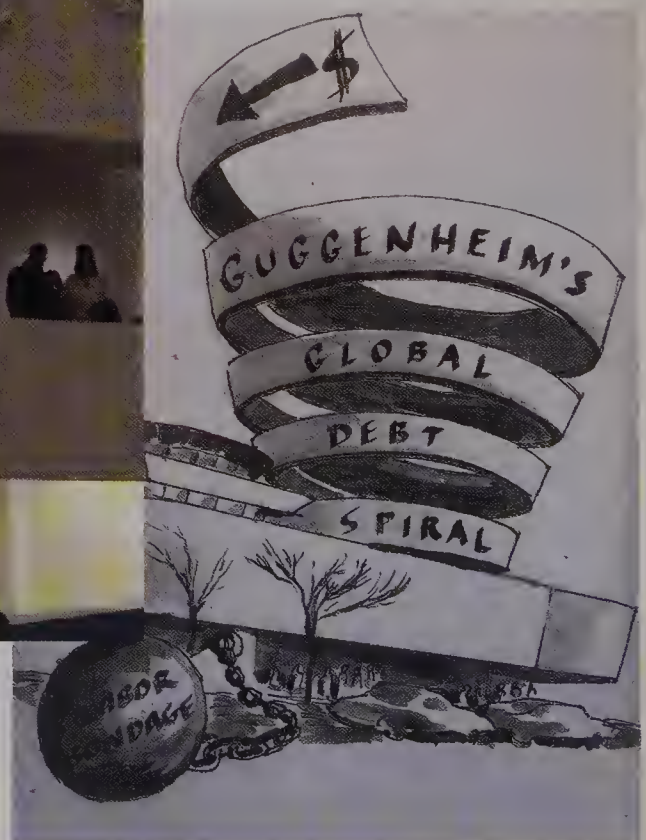
The protesters unfurled banners and dropped leaflets. The leaflets said: "Museums Should Protect Their Workers. Museums Should Stand Up for Human Rights. Museums Should Be Raising Labor Standards, Not Lowering Them."

It also said: "The Guggenheim Should Not Be Built on the Backs of Abused Workers."

For more information, go to gulflabor.org, a coalition of international artists.



PHOTOS BY HRAG VARTANIAN/HYPERALLERGIC.
GRAPHIC BY NOAH FISCHER OF OCCUPY MUSEUMS.





IOWA CITIZENS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROTEST FIX THE DEBT, JULY 13, 2013. PHOTO BY IOWA CCI VIA FLICKR.

Astroturf Gets Mowed

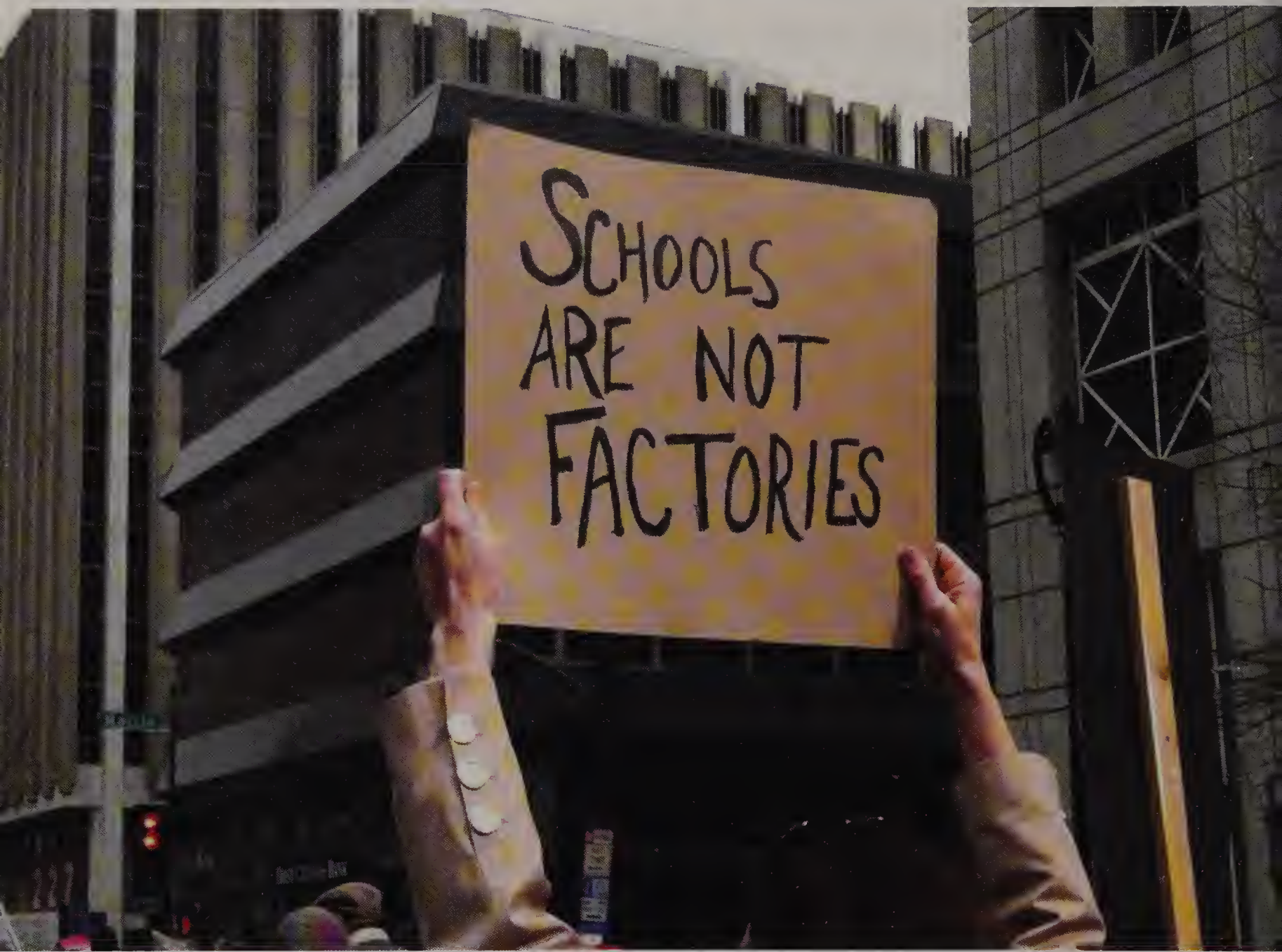
The "Campaign to Fix the Debt," the brainchild of billionaire Pete Peterson, is packing up its austerity charts after grassroots pressure convinced President Obama to change course on proposed cuts to Social Security.

Fix the Debt's outreach to college students, "The Can Kicks Back," is broke. No surprise after the group launched a bus tour of college campuses in a Mercedes van. E-mails from the group

indicate they collected 800 tin cans on their tour at a cost of about \$3,000/can. Priceless.

Activist groups such as ONE Northside in Chicago and Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement outed Fix the Debt for what it was, a Wall Street front group gunning for Social Security and Medicare while pushing special interest tax breaks.

For more information, contact PRWatch.org.



MORAL MARCH IN RALEIGH, NC, FEBRUARY 8, 2014.
PHOTO BY MORAL MONDAYS, [HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/MORALMONDAYS/MEDIA](https://twitter.com/moralmondays/media).

Historic March Against Rollbacks

On February 8, 80,000 demonstrators marched from historic Shaw University to the state capitol in Raleigh, North Carolina. "Moral March on Raleigh," part of the Moral Mondays campaign, was organized by Historic Thousands on Jones Street and the North Carolina NAACP to protest Republican Governor Pat McCrory and his allies in the legislature. It was the largest march in the South since the one in Selma in 1965.

Since taking over in 2010, state Republicans have taken an ax to social programs, cutting pre-K for 30,000 youngsters and draining \$90 million from public education. They also denied 500,000 people Medicaid coverage, imposed obstacles to voting, and rammed through a restrictive anti-choice law.

For more information, go to naacpnc.org or hkonj.com.

Not comfortable climbing stairs? Easy Climber® can give you a lift!

The most dangerous trip you take today could be the one up to your bedroom.

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Going up and down stairs whenever you please might seem like a small thing to some people... but it's become a thing of the past for me. I've known for awhile that for me, climbing stairs is tempting fate. Now, everyone from my doctor to my kids are telling me I need to avoid them. The problem is, I've lived in this house for years, and if I don't use the stairs I either have to sleep in my family room or live in my bedroom. Why should I risk my safety just to live my life? Then, a friend told me about an innovative solution, Easy Climber®. It's basically a chair lift for your stairs... and it's given me back my home.

At the 1889 World's Fair in Paris, the company that makes the Easy Climber® was inspired by the lift used in the Eiffel Tower and later created a lift

Why this is the safest and most reliable product on the market

Safety: Easy Climber features a swivel seat and footrest that are powered to enable you to get in and out of the chair safely and easily. Sensors automatically stop it immediately if it hits an object. There's even a EZ Clip buckle on the seat belt and no slip handles for added peace of mind.

Quality and Simplicity: This company has been making these products for a long time— they do it right. This exclusive model features innovative design and quality components. It's simple and reliable, with the least need for maintenance and repair.

Warranty: This system is backed by Easy Climber exclusive limited lifetime warranty - the best in the business.

Flexibility: Easy Climber is designed for easy installation on either side of the staircase. The seat-mounted controller can be placed on either side and the call/send controls can be mounted wherever you want them. When you're not using it, simply park Easy Climber at the top of the stairs and out of sight.



of their own. In 1961 they introduced the first seated stair lift, and now they've taken their knowledge and expertise and created the safest stair climber on the market today. Easy Climber® has exclusive safety features and design innovations as standard equipment.

This exclusive product was designed with one overwhelming goal: safety first. From a seat that won't let you get out the wrong way to a battery backup for power outages, this stair climber has the features you want and the safety you need. Why risk your life on the stairs when an easy and affordable solution is only a phone call away. Call now and a knowledgeable product expert will answer any questions you may have.

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All my friends have new cell phones. They carry them around with them all day, like mini computers, with little tiny keyboards and hundreds of programs which are supposed to make their life easier. Trouble is... my friends can't use them. The keypads are too small, the displays are hard to see and the phones are so complicated that my friends end up borrowing my Jitterbug when they need to make a call. I don't mind... I just got a new phone too... **the new Jitterbug Plus.** Now I have all the things I loved about my Jitterbug phone along with some great new features that make it even better!

GreatCall® created the Jitterbug with one thing in mind—to offer people a cell phone that's easy to see and hear, simple to use and affordable. Now, they've made the cell phone experience even better with the Jitterbug Plus. It features a lightweight, comfortable design with a backlit keypad and big, legible numbers. There is even a dial tone so you know the phone is ready to use. You can also increase the volume with one touch and the speaker's been improved so you get great audio quality and can hear every word. The battery has been improved too— it's one of the longest lasting on the market— so you won't have to charge it as often. The phone comes to you with your account already set up and is easy to activate.

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there is no contract to sign, you are not locked in for years at a time and won't be subject to early termination fees. The U.S.-based customer service is knowledgeable and helpful and the phone gets service virtually anywhere in the continental U.S. Above all, you'll get one-touch access to a friendly, and helpful GreatCall operator. They can look up numbers, and even dial them for you! They are always there to help you when you need them.

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Taking on TransCanada



February 13, 2013, was a special day in Washington, D.C. It wasn't merely because hundreds of demonstrators marched in front of the White House to stop the Keystone XL pipeline. It wasn't because environmental activists like Robert Kennedy Jr. and celebrities like Daryl Hannah were among the dozens of demonstrators arrested. Nor was it due to the arrests of veteran civil rights leader Julian Bond and former NASA climate scientist James Hansen, who fa-

mously said developing Canada's tar sands would be "game over" for the climate, what made this day special.

The remarkable thing that happened that day was the arrest of two people you may never have heard of: Michael Brune and Allison Chin.

Chin was the president of the Sierra Club, and Brune is still its executive director. Up until that day, for its entire existence the venerable Sierra Club had a policy against direct action.

Dave Saldana wrote and directed the new short documentary "Keystone Pipelines Exposed," a production of the Center for Media and Democracy Investigative Fund.

"This call for climate action is important enough that, for the first time in our 120-year history, we have suspended the Sierra Club's longstanding policy that prohibits civil disobedience," Chin wrote. "Today is a one-time event to face arrest in order to elevate discussion about a critical issue."

"We want to send a strong message that we expect the President's ambitions to meet the scale of the challenge and reject a pipeline that carries dirty, thick oil," Brune said, encouraging President Obama to "fight with both fists" on the issue.

While it's far from clear that Obama is taking his advice, opponents of the Keystone XL pipeline sure are—and not only the big environmentalists, like the Sierra Club, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Greenpeace, and, of course, Bill McKibben's 350.org, which has done so much to draw attention to the crisis of climate change. "We've destabilized the planet's climate system, and the only question is how much farther we're going to go," he told Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now!* If we don't reverse direction, he said, "what we call civilization will just be a big disaster response operation."

Some groups, like Bold Nebraska, which is part of Progress Now, have a lot of skin in the game. With the pipeline routed through their land and posing a catastrophic risk to their water and their livelihoods, farmers and ranchers in rock-ribbed, red-state Nebraska are making common cause with Prius-driving Greens, and a wide swath of Americans of many stripes in between.

Tea Partiers have been some of the strangest of bedfellows with environmental activists. In addition to their concerns about the viability of their property, many farmers and ranchers have taken great offense at TransCanada's efforts to force people off their land.

TransCanada has already begun eminent domain actions in dozens of cases

from South Dakota to Texas.

"The fact that there is such a diverse and strong and motivated coalition that's come together to fight the Keystone pipeline is yet another indication of what a bad deal this is for the entire country. It's not just ardent environmentalists who are concerned about this," says Tiernan Sittenfeld, senior vice president for government affairs at the League of Conservation Voters. "When you have lifelong environmentalists standing with landowners standing with members of the Tea Party saying this is

"When a company like TransCanada comes along and tries to bully and intimidate us into signing unwanted easement agreements, it only serves to make us more determined."

bad for a country, this is not in our national interest."

"When a company like TransCanada comes along and tries to bully and intimidate us into signing unwanted easement agreements, it only serves to make us more determined, and we plant our feet just a little bit firmer in the sand," Nebraska farmer Randy Thompson told the House Energy and Commerce Committee in May 2011.

People all over the country are digging in their heels, from college students connected with 350.org to indigenous people who have launched the "Idle No More" campaign.

Tar Sands Blockade is an organiza-

tion of activists committed to nonviolent direct action against the Keystone XL pipeline. Some of their members sat in trees that TransCanada was about to chop down. Two of them were arrested for doing so in Texas in January 2013, and four supporters were also arrested.

Sometimes, the group uses cleverness to get its point across. On June 28 of last year, the group sent out a fake e-mail announcing TD Bank's divestment from Keystone. The ersatz press release stated: "TD will begin selling its shares in Keystone XL and other oil sands-related investments." It pretended to quote the company's environmental director saying, "Divesting from Keystone XL not only makes financial sense given the uncertainties surrounding the project, but it fits with our pledge to be 'As Green as Our Logo.'" "

The media stunt "was intended to hold TD Bank accountable for bank-rolling the most ecologically devastating project on planet Earth," said Tar Sands Blockade spokesperson Ron Seifert.

The coalition group Fearless Summer kicked off its actions last June, with coordinated events from coast to coast, from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico. The group took its cue from the Occupy movement, eschewing hierarchy and centralized leadership in favor of small groups taking action within their communities.

The effort that goes into street-level organizing is as much a matter of necessity as it is anything else. Facing one of the most profitable industries in the world, Keystone opponents know they can't compete in the Washington arena using the traditional weapons of choice, such as campaign contributions and lobbying budgets.

"The fossil fuel industry has made more money in the history of money [than anyone] in recent years," says Jason Kowalski, policy director at 350.org.

In addition to the millions of dollars TransCanada has spent lobbying for the project, the American Petroleum Institute has spent millions more.

That kind of spending carries a lot of clout.

"You cannot move a piece of legislation through Congress in the year 2013 unless the American Petroleum Institute proposes it," says Public Citizen's energy program director, Tyson Slocum. "You cannot move legislation without their consent. They are a de facto fourth branch of government."

"They are one of the most profitable industries in the world, and they're throwing that money into Washington, D.C.," says Kate Colarulli of the Sierra Club. "They're buying politicians. When we see politicians that vote the oil agenda, we see 500 times as much contributions coming from oil companies than we see going to politicians who don't vote the oil agenda."

For example, look to South Carolina, where Republican Senator Tim Scott, who sits on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and who gave one of the GOP's weekly addresses, offered his full-throated support to Keystone.

Why was a newly appointed Senator from South Carolina, a state not known for its thriving petroleum industry, stumping to build a foreign corporation's pipeline that doesn't come anywhere near his home state? Possibly because the oil and gas industry is among his largest sources of campaign contributions.

The \$153,000 Scott has received from oil and gas contributors is a comparatively low take for a legislator willing to do the industry's bidding. In Washington, D.C., a city where climate denial is something of a cottage industry, those who are willing to toe the corporate line can make out very well

indeed.

Consider also Senator Roger Wicker, the Mississippi Republican who made headlines with this heartfelt plea for understanding: "I think it's time for some tolerance in the public discourse regarding the many scientific viewpoints on climate change. Respect should be shown to those who have done the research and come to a different conclusion."

Wicker's career haul from the oil and gas industry? Just shy of \$650,000.

Senator John Barrasso, Republican

Political contributions are an astonishingly good investment for oil companies.

of Wyoming, famously quipped in a July 2013 hearing on climate change that Obama and the Democrats "are willing to bet the economy today on an uncertain [prediction] about the future." Which is easy for him to say, considering he's gambling with \$532,000 in oil-industry house money.

Political contributions are an astonishingly good investment for oil companies.

"One of the most profitable investments they make, one of the biggest returns they get on their money is the money that they pay into campaign contributions to politicians: Pay a few million dollars and they get back bil-

lions on those investments," says Oil Change International research director Lorne Stockman.

The Center for American Progress backs up Stockman's assertion. Its research finds that for every dollar the top five oil companies spent lobbying in Washington, they got back \$30 in tax breaks. That translates to a 3,000-percent return.

Of course, they don't limit their contributions to the federal level. If the pipeline is approved, state governments will have much to say about how it's routed, how construction will take place, and how landowners will be compensated when their property is seized. Many states are willing to pay for that privilege.

"States offer property tax breaks for pipeline companies to build pipelines through their states," says Stockman. "So we see very favorable property tax terms on the state level for these kind of projects."

Not willing to leave anything to chance, the oil industry is making sure state legislators see things their way. As the Center for Media and Democracy reported, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) sent nine state legislators on an industry-paid field trip to the Alberta tar sands in 2012.

ALEC, which receives funding from TransCanada, the Koch brothers (whose Canadian subsidiary has tar sands investments), and other fossil fuel corporations, set up the event to put legislators in the same room as the industry lobbyists who paid for the lavish private-jet travel and fine dining. ALEC also prompted each of the nine legislators to send their corporate sponsors a thank you note, with a reminder of what the lobbyists had paid for the tour.

The Center also uncovered e-mails between TransCanada's lobbyist and Ohio state representative John Adams

in which the lobbyist provided Adams with a model bill in support of the pipeline. Adams swiftly introduced the bill in the legislature. It was co-sponsored by another participant in ALEC's Alberta field trip.

The only thing standing in the way of the Keystone XL pipeline is the organized resistance at the grassroots. TransCanada has responded to the protests by trying to demonize its adversaries.

First, TransCanada filed lawsuits to stifle the opposition with the threat of arrest.

In January 2013, it won a permanent injunction against the Tar Sands Blockade, Rising Tide North America, Rising Tide Texas, and almost two dozen protesters. They all agreed not to trespass on TransCanada's property so as to avoid facing a \$5 million lawsuit from the company.

Last May in Oklahoma, it sought a temporary restraining order against the Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance and twenty-one individuals who had been protesting at the pipeline construction site. The judge agreed to bar three of the protesters.

"TransCanada is dead wrong if they think a civil lawsuit against a handful of Texans is going to stop a grassroots civil disobedience movement," Tar Sands Blockade spokesman Ramsey Sprague told *The Oklahoman*. "This is nothing more than another example of TransCanada repressing dissent and bullying Texans who are defending their homes and futures from toxic tar sands."

More ominously, TransCanada has been briefing police officers on Keystone XL protests.

The group Bold Nebraska filed a freedom of information request and obtained a slideshow that TransCanada used on December 11, 2012, to brief law enforcement. Included in the slide-

show were the names and photographs of some of the organizers of the protests. Many of the photographs appear to have been taken from the websites of the protest groups. And while the slideshow acknowledged that there has been "no physical violence to this point," it recommended reporting demonstrators to the FBI and suggested prosecution under state and federal anti-terrorism laws.

"Try as TransCanada might to slander Tar Sands Blockade and our growing grassroots movement, we know who the real criminals are," said Ron Seifert of Tar Sands Blockade, who was pictured in the slideshow. "The real criminals are those profiting from this deadly

"That's how bad it's gotten, that people who are exercising their constitutionally protected rights to assemble, to protest, to criticize the government are being treated as if they're terrorists."

tar sands pipeline by endangering families living along the route and pumping illegal levels of air toxins into fence-line communities."

The effort to label protesters as terrorists is especially disturbing.

"Laws designed to go after terrorism and Al Qaeda are now going after ranchers," says Kevin Zeese, co-director of It's Our Economy. "That's how bad it's gotten, that people who are exercising their constitutionally protected rights to assemble, to protest, to criticize the government are being treated as if they're terrorists."

"The word 'terrorism' is used routinely by law enforcement agencies and American intelligence agencies as a pretext to undertake actions against people engaged in lawful, free-speech activities," says Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, co-founder and executive director of the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund.

Law enforcement has also been infiltrating groups protesting against Keystone.

As *Earth Island Journal* reported last year, the Bryan County Sheriff's Department in Oklahoma sent undercover officers to a nonviolent training camp organized by the Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance.

"At least two law enforcement officers infiltrated the training camp and drafted a detailed report about the upcoming protest, internal strategy, and the character of the protesters themselves," *Earth Island Journal* reported. Because of the infiltration, the police were able to pull over vehicles that were headed to the protest site, and the demonstrators had to call off the action.

Verheyden-Hilliard believes that the opposition to Keystone will withstand the pressure from TransCanada and law enforcement.

"Despite all these threats, the people have always come back, they always stand up for what they believe," she says.

Or, as Jason Kowalski of 350.org puts it, "If we win, it's because of our bodies and our spirits and our courage and our numbers. We know we have the moral high ground." ♦

3 Myths About Keystone

Myth 1: Keystone XL will create more than 100,000 jobs in the United States.

Background

Many Keystone proponents use the more conservative figure of 20,000 jobs, but the Republican-controlled House Energy and Commerce Committee insists that additional 100,000 jobs will spring from the pipeline. Meanwhile, the American Petroleum Institute projects 500,000 jobs by 2035.

Reality

The U.S. State Department Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement found that once operational, Keystone XL would employ thirty-five permanent employees and fifteen contractors.

Cornell University's Global Labor Institute recommended "a high level of skepticism regarding the value of KXL as an important source of American jobs." It also found that the pipeline could put at risk much of the \$76 billion in agriculture and related industries in the states the pipeline would traverse, jeopardizing half a million jobs in agriculture alone.

Myth 2: The Keystone XL pipeline would pump billions into the economy.

Background

TransCanada claims that the pipeline and related economic activity will generate \$45 billion a year for the United States.

Reality

"U.S. gasoline prices will rise, with the greatest effect on the Midwest," reports Consumer Watchdog. The group predicts a rise of twenty-five cents to forty cents a gallon. It concludes: "The overall economic benefit to U.S. consumers is in doubt." Those who would benefit include Motiva, the largest refinery in Port Arthur, Texas, which is jointly owned by the Saudi state-run oil company, Aramco, and Royal Dutch Shell. Valero, which is U.S.-owned, would also benefit, but U.S. taxpayers may not. The San Antonio-based company made \$68 billion in sales in 2012 but got a \$157 million tax refund. TransCanada and its partners may also file for a Master Limited Partnership, a legal fiction that would allow them to virtually escape tax liability.

Myth 3: The Keystone XL pipeline is the solution to America's oil woes.

Background

TransCanada says, "The Keystone XL Pipeline is not a crude oil export pipeline—period. It is a supply line to U.S. Gulf Coast refineries. . . . This much-needed oil will allow refineries to create products that we all rely on every day—gasoline for our vehicles, aviation fuels, and diesel fuels to help transport goods throughout the continent."

Reality

Valero is preparing to refine tar sands oil into diesel fuel that gathers a much higher price on the global market than it does in the United States. The province of Alberta is also keen on getting those higher returns. "Job one for our government is reaching international markets," said Premier Alison Redford. Tyson Slocum of Public Citizen says the pipeline "has nothing to do with providing ample supplies for American consumers. It has everything to do with getting trapped tar sands oil into the global market where they can get a far higher return than they could just selling to the United States."

Dear President Obama:



Robert Redford is an actor, director, and longtime environmental activist.

I just have one thing to say when it comes to the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. Mr. President: Don't do it.

Keystone XL would move some of the dirtiest oil on our planet through America's heartland, exposing our precious farmlands to toxic tar sands oil spills. It would drive expansion of the energy-intensive strip-mining and drilling for the tar that lies deep under Canada's great boreal forests and wetlands so that the oil industry can send it to Gulf Coast refineries for overseas markets.

Very simply, Keystone XL will make climate change worse.

In your State of the Union address, you made it clear that fighting climate change is about your legacy—and our well-being and the well-being of our children. You wisely said: "When our children's children look us in the eye and ask if we did all we could to leave them a safer, more stable world, with new sources of energy, I want us to be able to say yes, we did."

But if you approve this pipeline, you won't be able to say that any longer.

Your Administration has started on the right path by moving ahead to reduce carbon pollution at its source from our cars, trucks and power plants. But we can't get where we need to be if you still are willing to approve a climate-wrecking project like the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. It just doesn't make sense.

It especially doesn't make sense as California is suffering through the worst drought in over a century and the East Coast has been hit by one megastorm after another.

This is what climate chaos looks like.

A majority of Americans report that they experienced one or more extreme weather events in the past year. In 2013, there were seven weather and climate disaster events with losses exceeding \$1 billion each across the United States. Overall, these events killed 109 people and had significant economic and public health effects on the areas impacted.

This is what climate change feels like.

In January, the State Department issued its final environmental review of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, once again underestimating the climate damage. Keystone XL was poised to go through the final national interest determination when a court in Nebraska in February found that landowners there were right to challenge the governor for pushing a route through that state. The court ruled that any route through Nebraska needs to be set through the regular, legal process.

“It's time to hit pause on the Keystone XL decision process.”

This means that it's time to hit pause on the Keystone XL decision process. You've said earlier that you can't make a decision if you don't know the route.

And after Nebraskans have decided the route, and the State Department has included that in the environmental review, then it will be time to get back to the national interest determination.

At that point, you and the State Department will have to take a hard look at what this pipeline means for our econ-

omy, energy strategy, and environment. You'll also have to take a hard look at what it means for our foreign policy—especially our climate strategy.

You have committed the United States to reduce our emissions 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and to keep the world temperature rise below 2 degrees. You need to ask yourself how we can possibly stay below 2 degrees in a world where we allow the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline to be built.

Secretary of State John Kerry recently announced that fighting climate change is now a foreign policy priority on the same level as fighting poverty, terrorism, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. And he's right.

You don't win these fights with half-measures. You need to go all the way, and that means saying no to dirty

If you approve this pipeline, you won't be able to say you left your children's children a safer, more stable world.

energy projects like Keystone.

The only way we can hope to combat climate change, protect our precious land and water, and prevent future extreme weather disasters is to cut the carbon pollution that's warming our planet, and replace dirty energy sources with clean, renewable energy.

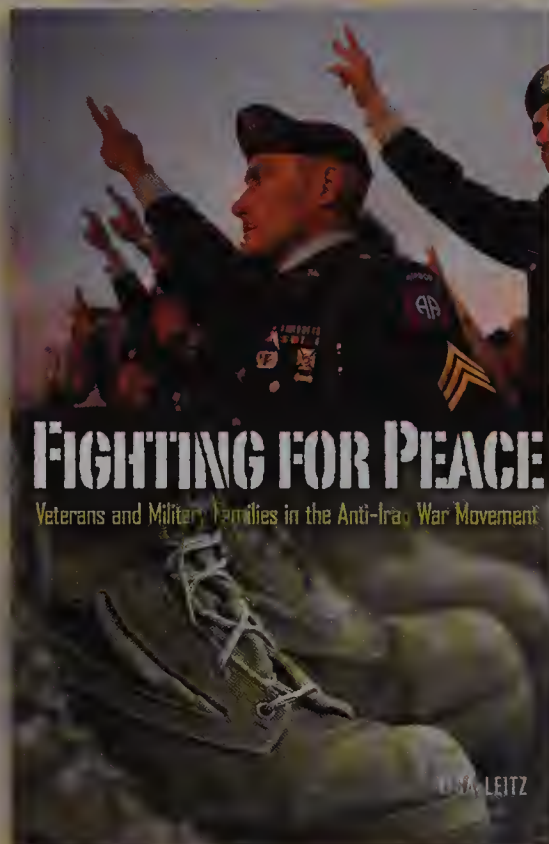
Keystone XL has no place in a healthy climate world. ♦

THE MILITARY PEACE MOVEMENT

Fighting for Peace brings to light an important yet neglected aspect of opposition to the Iraq War—the role of veterans and their families. Drawing on extensive participant observation and interviews, Lisa Leitz demonstrates how the harrowing war experiences of veterans and their families motivated a significant number of them to engage in peace activism.

“A remarkable chronicle.”

—COL. ANN WRIGHT, co-author of *DISSENT: Voices of Conscience*



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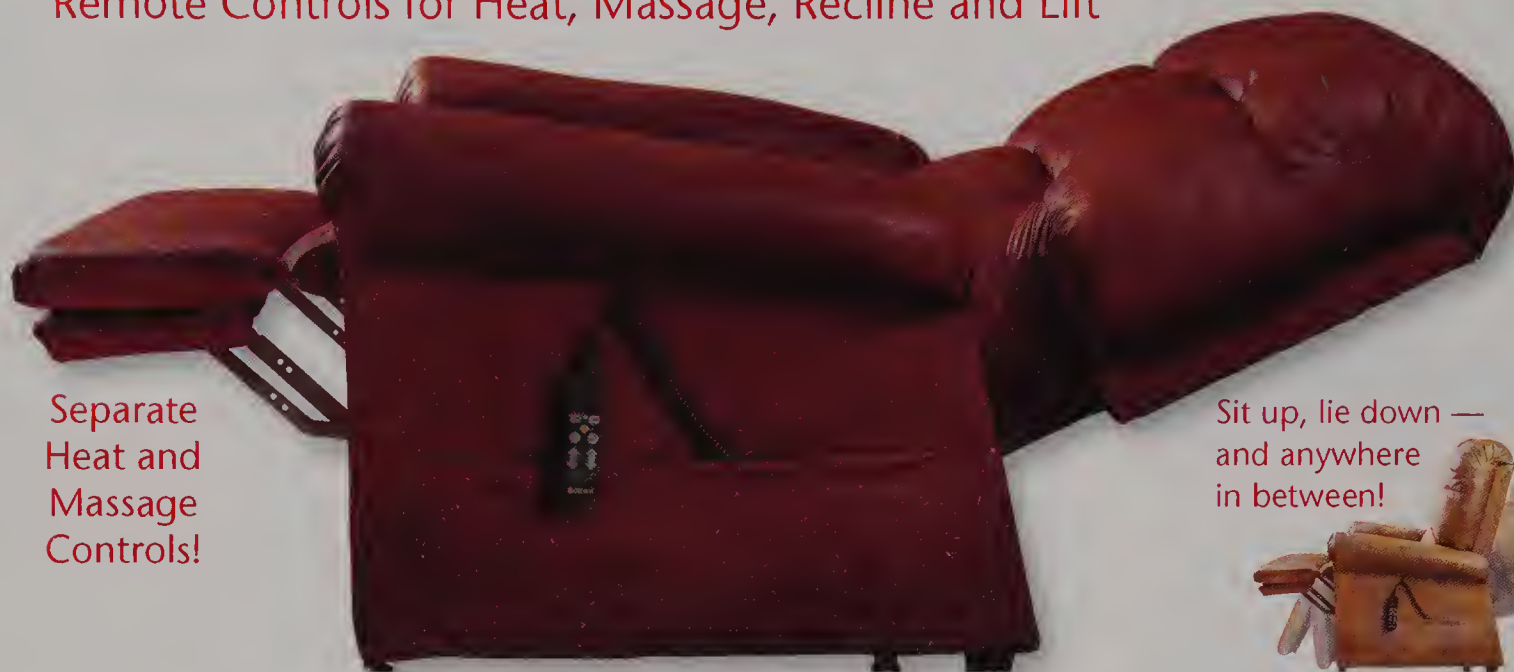
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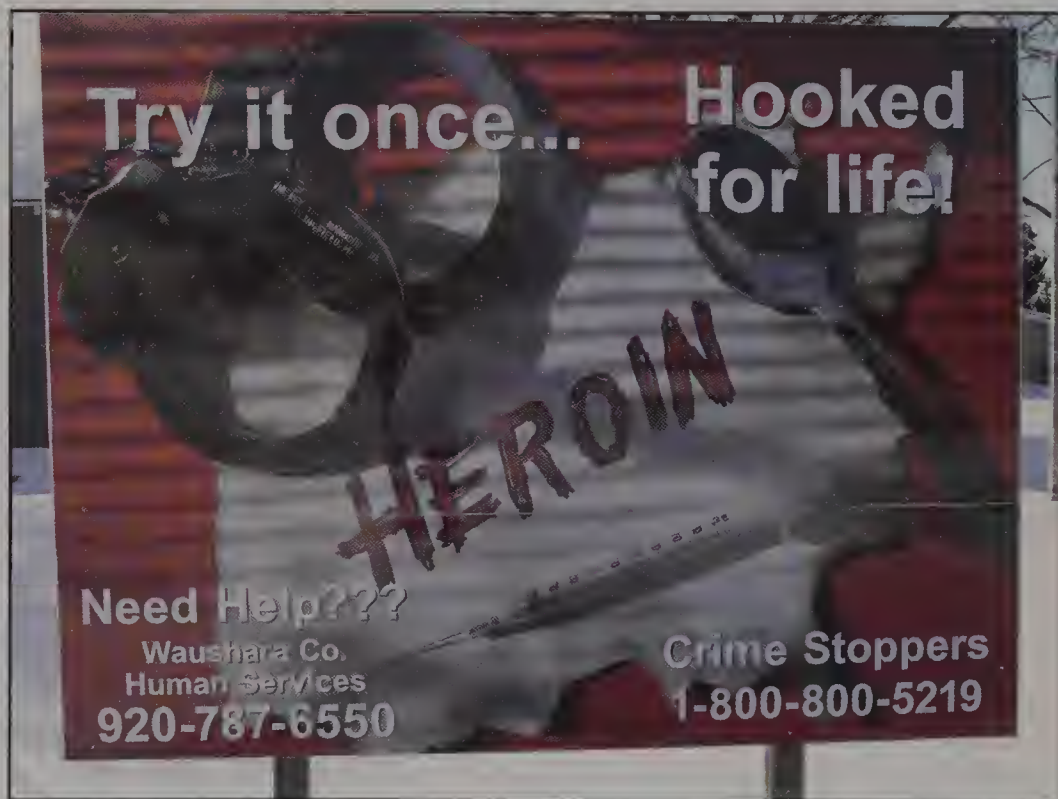
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This lift chair puts you safely on your feet!

Boom Times for Heroin

When actor Philip Seymour Hoffman died of a heroin overdose on February 2, the media started to pay attention to the new heroin epidemic in this country. But they missed one big point: the connection between the Great Recession and the heroin spike.



Billboard in Waushara County, Wisc.

Photo by Anne-Marie Cusac.

For one thing, as unemployment jumped, the opportunity to make a fast buck selling heroin became more and more attractive.

Douglas Darby knows the lure. He came of age in a decade of staggering youth unemployment. To Darby, dealing drugs looked like a career. He says when he was in high school, counselors would take him aside and tell him he was going down the wrong path. Darby says he would think, “Who are you to criticize? I make more money in a day than you make in a month.” Darby mostly sold pills, he says. But he understands the heroin trade.

“Heroin is one of those drugs that can make you a millionaire overnight,” he says. “The profits are substantial.”

Even though he says he made \$22,000 a month by selling pills, Darby was blowing it all.

“I was making tremendous money,” he says. “All I was doing was partying and having fun. . . . But at the end of a month, I couldn’t pay rent. It would take five pills just to get me high. That’s damn near \$500.” The costs overwhelmed him. “I had no

Anne-Marie Cusac is associate professor in the Department of Communication at Roosevelt University and the author of “Cruel and Unusual: The Culture of Punishment in America” (Yale University Press, 2009). To get in contact with John Roberts and the HERO foundation, go to <http://theherofoundation.org>. To reach Douglas Darby of Rise Together, see the group’s Facebook page.

choice but to go to heroin,” he says.

After he argued with his supplier, Darby resorted to robbery, holding up two Green Bay-area pharmacies in a one-week period. He stole Oxycontin, “just under 1,000 pills,” he says, an “\$80,000 street value.” Thirteen days later, the police got him. “If I didn’t get raided that day, I was going to go out and rob another pharmacy.”

In the last eleven years, Darby says, he has known twenty-one people who have died from an overdose.

“I’m one of the lucky ones,” he says. You’re lucky “as long as you’re not being put in the ground.”

Billy Roberts wasn’t so lucky. A gifted soccer player from the South Side of Chicago, Billy started to get into trouble when the family moved to Homer Glen, a Will County, Illinois, subdivision amid farms.

There’s not much to do in Homer Glen. Billy found a group of kids who played around with drugs. “Out here it’s entertainment,” says Billy’s dad, John Roberts, a retired Chicago police officer.

A year later, Billy’s parents figured out that he was doing cocaine. They quickly put Billy into a forty-day treatment program. Billy did very well, says John. They thought the trouble might be over. But “whatever it was drove Billy to experiment, he wasn’t done yet.”

A couple of years later, Billy started a job. A co-worker offered him a pipe of heroin. “If you like the feeling of marijuana and you smoke heroin, it’s sublime,” John says. “It’s like the first time you have cherry pie.”

Billy went back into treatment. John says he asked his son, “What can we do to help you?” Billy answered, “Get me out of Homer Glen.”

John put the family home up for sale in the midst of the housing collapse. It didn’t sell. “So Billy and I moved into my mom’s house for a while” back to Chicago’s South Side. “Beverly—98th

and Claremont,” near where Billy had grown up. When Billy managed to locate drugs in Beverly and overdosed, his father moved him into his sister’s house in southern Wisconsin. “I thought we had it beaten,” says Roberts.

One day, Billy came home from work and went to his room to take a nap. His sister walked past his room and reported to her father that she could hear Billy snoring, but that it sounded wrong.

“I went through his door like a cruise missile,” says John. “He was turning blue. He was cold to the touch.” That day, his family saved his life. “I thought, ‘Oh, my God, are we lucky.’”

The idea of a drug that is this seductive preoccupies John. “What is it about this drug?” he asks, wondering why people keep taking it even after almost losing their lives. “How can anyone find something so hideous so appealing? Do they know what they’re risking?”

Billy risked it all. And Billy lost. He spent the early part of September 20, 2009, in the home of friends who weren’t drug users, and who didn’t know Billy had ever taken drugs, says his dad. In the afternoon, Billy’s friends went off to a White Sox game without him.

His friends came home about 9 p.m., found Billy, and immediately called his father, saying, “I don’t think Billy’s breathing.” His parents called 911, and raced to their car. But on the drive, a paramedic came on the phone and said, “We lost him.”

Heroin is an ideal recession drug because it’s cheap, going for \$5 to \$10 a bag in Chicago. While Hoffman’s death drew camera lenses to the drug trade in New York City, actually America’s Second City ranks first. In 2010, the Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy published a ten-year study on heroin use and found that Chicago ranked “first in the number and rate of individuals aged twenty-one and older admitted” to emergency rooms for heroin overdoses

and “first in the percentage of arrestees in the Cook County jail testing positive for heroin.” The study found evidence of heroin’s spread. Among white women, the only group in the county to experience an increase in heroin-related deaths, there had been a 40 percent fatality increase.

Cook County deaths had actually decreased overall. But the “collar counties” encircling it saw an increase. “In Lake County, deaths increased by 130 percent from 2000 to 2009,” noted the study. In McHenry County, deaths had spiked 150 percent. And “in just two years, deaths in Will County have doubled.”

In a stark shift from 1998, the year the study began, when heroin use ranked fourth as the “reason Illinoisans entered publicly funded treatment,” heroin had risen to “the second most common drug after alcohol and the most common illegal substance for which individuals enter treatment in Illinois.” A follow-up study in 2012 found the trends continuing, with significant increases in heroin use among young people, Caucasians, and Hispanics.

Linda Lewaniak has headed the Center for Addiction Medicine at Chicago’s Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital for the past twelve years. She’s seen the changes. Eight years ago, her center had between two and four heroin addicts at a time. Now about 25 percent are there because of heroin.

Frank Harris, program director for three Chicago Lutheran Social Services substance abuse clinics, has also noticed a difference. “I can see the numbers rising, and they’re younger people,” he says. “Caucasian, and from the suburbs. It’s a crazy, crazy thing.”

Younger drug addicts typically start on opiates, which they often obtain legally, he says, rattling off their names: “Vicodin, Oxycodone, Oxycontin.” Then the addiction takes hold. “You get it for injury or a prescription for you or

a family member," he explains. "All of a sudden, you're getting a synthetic high from this opiate." But the high comes with a price tag: "\$10-\$20 a pill. They're pretty expensive." People who find they can't afford their habit turn to heroin, he says. "Heroin is so cheap, relatively speaking."

On the morning of April 12, 2012, in Redgranite, Wisconsin, a town of 2,000 in the central part of the state, a man who had been out walking his dog asked someone to call the police. "At approximately 10:30 a.m., Officer Kyle Tarr of the Redgranite Police Department was dispatched to a medical emergency at 155 Steger Street in the Village of Redgranite, Waushara County, Wisconsin. Upon his arrival, Officer Tarr observed a female lying on her back in the grass," says a filing in the Waushara County, Wisconsin, Circuit Court. She had discolored skin and lacked a pulse. She had wandered out of a nearby bar, sat down on the grass next to the porch of a house where she didn't live, and died alone. An autopsy revealed the cause of death: "acute heroin fatality."

Her name was Amalia Henschel. She grew up in a yellow house with a brown, split-rail fence in a forest clearing. In high school, she had good grades, says her father, Michael Henschel. She played basketball and wrote in her journal. "She was that shy one," says her mother, Brigitte, who wears a locket with Amalia's ashes around her neck.

Her parents knew she was addicted to pills.

"We put her in treatment because we kept finding prescriptions on her. Insurance paid for the first thirty-day treatment," says her father. "After she relapsed, her parents paid for a ninety-day program, followed by three weeks in a halfway home.

"We paid out of our pocket \$15,000," says Brigitte. "We would have sold our house for her."

The Henschels think their daughter, like many people addicted to pills, ran out of money and turned to heroin. But Brigitte admits: "We didn't have a clue about a lot."

Her journals reveal how hard she tried to stay clean, says her mother. But Amalia relapsed again and again. She ended up in jail on a trespassing violation. She and her boyfriend were secretly doing drugs in a house while the owner was gone, her mother says. The police showed up.

Amalia Henschel got out of jail on April 11, 2012, at 5 a.m. Her father picked her up. "We spent a good day together," says her mother. They listened to music. Brigitte went out and got food. "That afternoon, she was supposed to come with me to my mom's," says Brigitte. But Amalia demurred, saying she had to meet some friends. Brigitte Henschel says a knife turned in her heart. "And she left."

"I go over every minute of that day," says Brigitte. She remembers how Amalia came up, hugged her, and said, "I love you, Mama." It was the thing Amalia always said when she left. She did it twice on the day before she died.

Another factor contributing to the heroin epidemic is the decline in public funding for treatment and prevention, which took place once the Great Recession depleted state and county budgets.

"That year, when the first big cut came, yeah, my building suffered severely," says Harris, who runs a detox center, a twenty-eight day residential treatment center, and a halfway house for women. "In detox, I had to cut the number of beds that I had available because I had to cut a great number of staff," Harris says. "This translated into ten people a



Amalia Henschel lost her struggle with addiction.

day not receiving detox."

Despite the staff cuts, Harris's center remained open. Not so with others. "Programs closed," he says. "When you close programs, guess where those people end up? Prison, hospitals."

Harris says some addicts have fallen off the radar. "We don't even see them now because some of these people are ending up homeless," he says.

Kate Mahoney, executive director of PEER services, a treatment facility in Evanston, also bemoans the lack of funding. "People are calling for no-cost or low-cost treatment," she says. Like Harris, she has more people waiting for treatment than there are spots available.

She says she knows why heroin roared while the economy shrank. In tough economic times, "People want to detach more, and that's really what heroin and other opioids do," she says. The choice of drugs, she adds, is "not arbitrary."

Kristen Ward is staying at the Lutheran Social Services Halfway House that Harris runs. Caucasian, female, and from Chicago's south suburbs, Ward says she started drinking young, but quit in high school and joined Alcoholics Anonymous with a friend. She liked the group and stuck with it, going to nursing school and earning her degree and license. Years later, she says, "I was in an accident," and the doctor prescribed Vicodin. "He kept prescribing it."

Ward started to need the pills. When the legal supply ran out, she stole the drug from work, got caught, and lost her nursing license. She started using cocaine with a boyfriend, then quit. But the letdown was so bad that, though she was leery of heroin, she took it. It made her feel "so much better," she says. "Opiate was what I was addicted to anyway. You're a little numb. The pains of life are not as bad."

Heroin was easy to locate. "Yeah," she says, "it's everywhere."

Ward repeatedly tried to end her addiction. But during the recession, she says, she had trouble getting treatment. She says she went in for detox, which lasted six days. "Then they said, 'We don't have a bed here for you.' " Ward says she left, "and two weeks later I was using." She went back to treatment after seven months. "The next time they said, 'We don't have a bed for you,' I said, 'Find a bed for me because I'm not going back out there.' . . . I knew if I went home and tried to do it on my own, the possibility of me staying sober on my own was not going to happen."

The treatment didn't stick and, ultimately, Ward served a five-month jail term in suburban Will County for shoplifting. Jail was "the best thing that happened," Ward says. "If you get the gift of desperation, it seems sometimes that's what you need. . . . I immediately made the decision that I wasn't going to waste one more day." She says she helped

women at the jail get their GEDs, and signed up for drug education classes and Bible studies.

"Every day I was productive," she says. "It makes all the difference in the world when you feel useful."

Ward, who says she has been sober

Grieving parents and recovering addicts are working together to save lives.

for almost a year now, hopes to earn back her nursing license and get custody of her two young boys. She's seeking certification in drug and alcohol recovery. "My purpose is to help people who have gone through the same things I've gone through."

Douglas Darby shares that purpose. He's the co-founder of Rise To-

gether, which offers educational programming for young people in Wisconsin. He's trying to keep them sober and, if they have drug problems, steer them to a drug counselor or a clinic. He has connected with the Henschels, who are working to bring Rise Together into area schools.

"We're trying to pull these kids into the community" of sobriety, he says. The work, he adds, helps keep him sober, too.

"For the first time in my adult life," he says, "I give a shit about my name."

In Illinois, John Roberts and another grieving parent started the Heroin Epidemic Relief Organization (HERO) in 2010. HERO offers support to parents and does educational talks. Along with Katherine Kane-Willis of the Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy, Roberts also helped to write Illinois's Good Samaritan Law, which bars arrest of most people who report overdoses.

"I'm very proud of that," says Roberts. "The mission of every police officer is, above all, to save lives." ♦

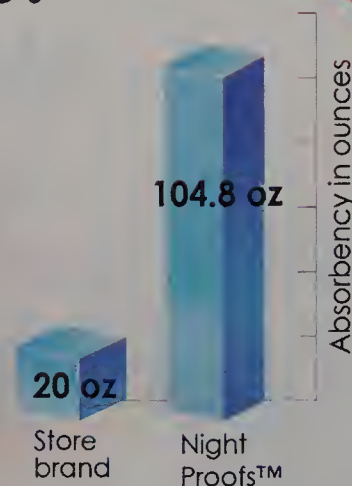


Brigette and Michael Henschel.

Photo by Anne-Marie Cusac.

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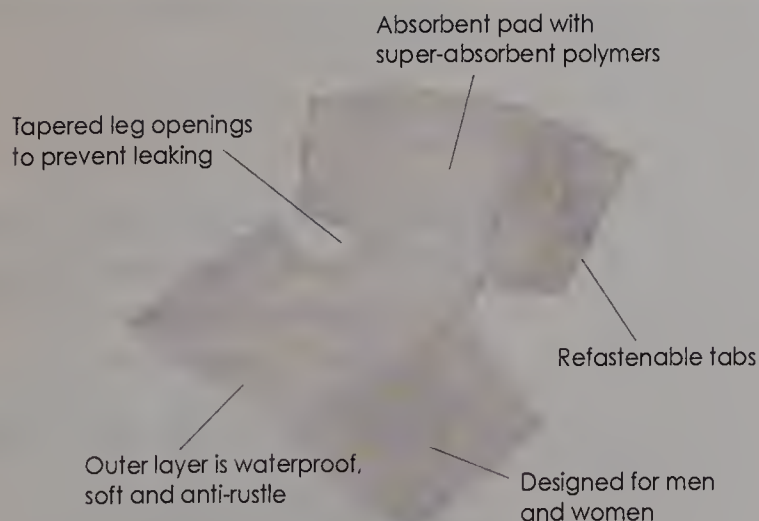
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– Janet F.

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Scott Walker's Dubious Dodge

Many people can't understand how Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker managed to escape being indicted by the first John Doe investigation, which led to convictions of six of his associates.

For instance, a former Wisconsin attorney general and a Milwaukee county supervisor who was subpoenaed by the John Doe prosecutor are wondering why Walker wasn't charged with violating the state's public records law while he was Milwaukee county executive. The recently released 27,000 pages of documents from the first John Doe investigation provided enough evidence to bring such a charge, they say.

John Weishan, a Democrat and a critic of Walker on the Milwaukee County Board, submitted an open records request for the computer communications in the county executive's office back in the spring of 2010. Weishan suspected at the time that Walker or members of his staff were doing campaign work on the public dime, which turned out to be the case.

But Weishan received only four vacuous pages back in response to his request, along with a bill for \$2,800 and the accusation from Walker's staff that the supervisor was engaged in a "fishing expedition."

Today, Weishan says, he feels vindicated. The document dump "proves that everything I thought was going on at the time did take place," he says.

The documents show Walker regularly communicating on a private e-mail system during work hours both on campaign business and county business.

Cindy Archer, Walker's deputy, told another staffer about the secret communication network: "Consider yourself now in the 'inner circle.' :) I use this private account quite a bit to communicate with SKW." Those are Walker's initials.

In another e-mail, Walker asked Archer to "get me all the facts" to counter an attack by his Republican primary challenger.

The chief investigator of the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, David Budde, testified on November 1, 2010, that Walker himself, as Milwaukee county executive, was illegally using the private communication system that his staff had set up.

Budde was asked under oath: "Did you find any e-mails written by the county executive himself" on "personal laptops in the county executive's Office?"

Matthew Rothschild is senior editor of The Progressive.

Budde answered with one word: “Yes.”

The documents prove his point. Walker was involved in the tiniest details of political responses in his office, from writing talking points for his county staff to slowing down responses to constituents who raised politically harmful issues.

For instance, at 10:25 a.m. on April 29, 2010, Walker used his campaign e-mail address to counter a negative press conference from his critics on the county board about problems at a county mental health facility. As the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported, he recommended that a sympathetic state legislator should say, “This press conference is a political stunt that ignores the facts.” He said her statement “should be short and to the point.” And he added: “We need to find a personal e-mail for someone on her staff to get this language (or read it to them over the phone). It should NOT be e-mailed to her official account.”

One month before, he wrote to aides about this issue: “Keep me out of the story.” And two weeks before his election, he told his staff “we should not make it public” when he heard about a possible lawsuit by the family of a woman who died of starvation in a county facility.

On the afternoon of July 1, 2010, Walker sent an e-mail to Cynthia Archer, director of the Department of Administrative Services, to deflect an attack from his primary opponent, Mark Neumann, the *Wisconsin State Journal* reported. Walker said: “Get me all the facts I can get.”

On Friday, May 14, 2010, at 8:46 a.m., Walker responded to an e-mail he received from his deputies at skw@scott-walker.org, one of his personal e-mail addresses. This is his now-infamous e-mail about staffer Darlene Wink, who had just resigned after admitting she posted campaign comments while at work. Her resignation was reported in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. “I talked to her at

home last night,” Walker wrote. “Feel bad. She feels worse. We cannot afford another story like this one. No one can give them any reason to do another story. That means no laptops, no websites, no time away during workday, et cetera.”

Investigator Budde stressed why this is important: “The significance of this e-mail is that it shows that the county executive would appear to be aware that laptops were used in the county executive’s office for accessing things on non-county networks.”

Budde also suggested—and this has not been noted by the mainstream press—that Walker’s staffers might have taken his e-mail to mean that they should destroy evidence in the ensuing hours.

As Budde testified: “It also is very significant because it shows that the various members of the county executive staff worked in concert to conceal laptops and/or networks—wireless networks that were in existence in that office suite, and these items were not present when we did our search warrant later in the day on May 14, 2010.”

Weishan points a finger directly at Walker.

“It’s clear from the e-mails that not only did Scott Walker know but he was the head cheerleader in orchestrating keeping this secret and conducting business outside the realm of the public,” Weishan says. “He actively engaged in business to defraud the public.”

Weishan says that’s a felony, and he adds that “submitting a false response to an open records request is also a felony.”

Weishan says the prosecutors asked for all the documents relating to his open records request, which he handed over to them. John Chisholm, the district attorney leading the investigation, along with assistant DA Bruce Landgraf, then interviewed him about this.

Weishan says he doesn’t want to criticize Chisholm, but he adds: “This is one of the few cases where it’s extremely crystal clear that Walker not only conspired

to break the open records law, but he did break the open records law.”

That law states that “all persons are entitled to the greatest possible information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those officers and employees who represent them.”

It adds that “an essential function of a representative government and an integral part of the routine duties of officers and employees whose responsibility it is to provide such information.” This “shall be construed in every instance with a presumption of complete public access.”

According to a “compliance outline” written by current Wisconsin Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen, a Republican, public records include “e-mail sent or received on an authority’s computer system” and “personal e-mail sent by officers or employees of the authority,” as well as “e-mail conducting government business sent or received on the personal e-mail account of an authority’s officer or employee.”

It is a felony to violate this law. “Whoever with intent to injure or defraud destroys, damages, removes or conceals any public record is guilty of a Class H felony,” the Wisconsin statutes say. And the penalty for a Class H felony is “a fine not to exceed \$10,000 or imprisonment not to exceed six years, or both.”

Former Wisconsin Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager, a Democrat, also believes there was sufficient evidence to indict Walker.

She says the documents show two kinds of illegal activities: “One that are political, done on state time to coordinate campaign. And two, you’ve got these documents that should be public record, and clearly they did this to avoid public records laws.”

The fact that Walker knew that campaign work was “being done on public time,” says Lautenschlager, “coupled with the fact that he was on this secret system, is enough to show intent.” ♦

Scott Walker's Inner Circle

"Milwaukee County government became a virtual arm of Walker's 2010 campaign for governor"

-- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



Scott Walker
Milwaukee County Executive



R.J. Johnson
Walker campaign adviser



Tim Russell
Walker's deputy chief of staff
Convicted



Keith Gilkes
Walker's campaign manager for governor



Thomas Nardelli
Walker's chief of staff



Cynthia Archer
Director, Department of Administrative Services



Darlene Wink
Walker's director of constituent services
Convicted



Kelly Rindfleisch
Walker's deputy chief of staff
Convicted

From: carcher1@wi.rr.com
To: [Kelly Rindfleisch](mailto:kelly.rindfleisch@gmail.com)
Subject: RE: test
Date: Monday, March 22, 2010 2:02:44 PM

Consider yourself now in the "inner circle". :) I use this private account quite a bit to communicate with SKW and Nardelli. You should be sure you check it throughout the day.

Congrats on your appointment. I am here for you if you need anything or if you just need to talk.

Cindy

----- Kelly Rindfleisch <kmrindfleisch@gmail.com> wrote:
> Got it.
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: carcher1@wi.rr.com [<mailto:carcher1@wi.rr.com>]
> Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 10:27 AM
> To: Kelly
> Subject: test

respond if you get this. thanks

THE PROGRESSIVE INTERVIEW

by Ed Rampell

Richard Wolff

Richard Wolff has emerged as one of the most prominent progressive economists in America. He appears on Free Speech TV, Link TV, and Pacifica Radio, and has been a repeat guest on Bill Moyers's program, as well as appearing on Charlie Rose's show. His books include *Capitalism Hits the Fan*, *Occupy the Economy*, and *Democracy at Work*.

Wolff got his B.A. from Harvard, a Master's from Stanford, and a Ph.D. in economics from Yale. He is a professor emeritus at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and a visiting professor in the graduate program for international affairs at the New School University in Manhattan, where he lives. Born in 1942 in Youngstown, Ohio, he's the son of working class parents who were refugees from the Nazis. After his family moved around the Midwest, they relocated to New York. In the 1980s, Wolff ran to be New Haven's mayor and city councilman on the Green Party ticket.

I caught up with Wolff during a January California tour, where he was mobbed by overflowing crowds wherever he spoke.

L.A.-based film historian/critic Ed Rampell is a frequent contributor to The Progressive. His most recent interview was with Joyce Carol Oates in the February issue.

Q: ● For most of your life, you've toiled in obscurity.
● How does it feel to finally have a mass audience?

Richard Wolff: I've got to pinch myself; I'm having the time of my life. But it's not me; it's the message.

Q: And that message is?

Wolff: The capitalist workplace is one of the most profoundly undemocratic institutions on the face of the Earth. Workers have no say over decisions affecting them. If workers sat on the board of directors of democratically operated self-managed enterprises, they wouldn't vote for the wildly unequal distribution of profits to benefit a few and for cutbacks for the many.

Q: Why do business leaders in the United States and Western Europe favor austerity? Doesn't it reduce demand for their products, and thus lower their potential profits?

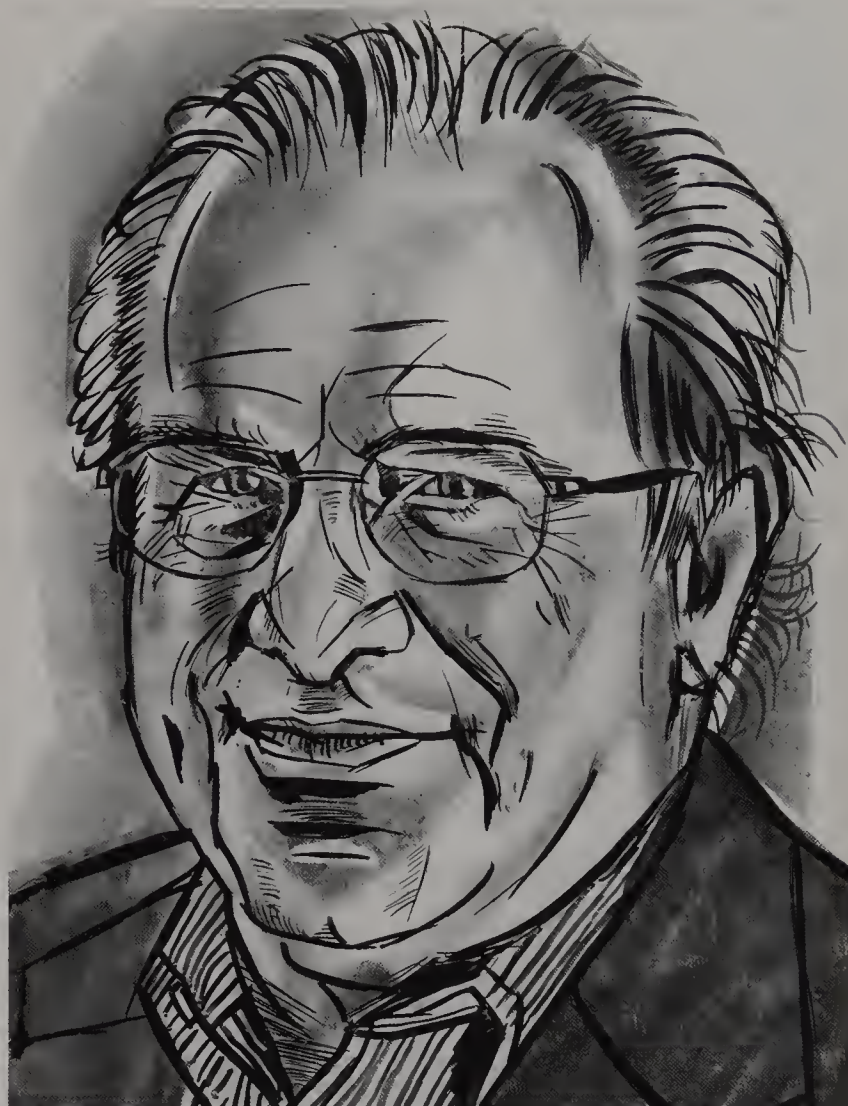
Wolff: The question is good. Why are executives of corporations constantly looking for every conceivable way to lower labor costs? The more successful capitalists are in cutting their wage costs, the less money workers will have to buy back what those same capitalists produce. It's a contradiction.

Sure, businesses would like lots of purchases. But the only way to deal with a depressed economy would be to tax the rich, who are hoarding their money, and move it into the hands of the middle and lower classes, because they're in a situation where they'll spend it as fast as they get it. That would solve the problem of demand, but only at the expense of the rich and corporations.

They've made a choice: They'd rather tough it out—stick it to the mass of people, even at the cost of losing customers—than be the one who gets hit with the tab for boosting the masses' purchasing power.

Here's where globalization comes in. U.S. businesses favor austerity here because they want to decrease the power of labor and save on labor costs, and they see a way to pull that off by shifting the sales of their products from the U.S.'s depressed, austerity-riddled economy to the exploding economies of Brazil, China, India, and so on.

Globalization gives American businesses an option: If austerity cripples purchasing power here, they still get to sell goods; they're just going to sell them elsewhere. The United States is being reconfigured to become more of an export-focused economy. That's Obama's policy. It's a way of managing demand when austerity crunches your own working class's income.



JOHANNA GOODMAN

“Globalization gives American businesses an option: If austerity cripples purchasing power here, they still get to sell goods; they’re just going to sell them elsewhere.”

Q: What do you think of President Obama?

Wolff: I look at Obama by linking him and the role he plays to the broad contours of what's happening in the United States. The last half-century of American history has been the systematic rolling back of what had been achieved by the pressure from below in the '30s and '40s.

The rollback of the New Deal finally eventuated in 2008 with a really serious economic crisis, which was the closest thing to the Great Depression we've ever had. You needed more than ever a distraction, somebody who could seem to be an "outsider," a fresh new face: a young, active African American. How much more outsider within America can you be?

Of course, it is a remarkable phenomenon that someone kept outside of America—the African American, marginalized, subordinated—could actually find his way into the White House.

But Obama's Presidency is continuing the reversal of the New Deal. Unfortunately, that's the role Obama has played and the legacy he'll leave.

Q: What do you think when people accuse Obama of being a "socialist"?

Wolff: It's a reflection of the fact that we live in a country that has so confused and demonized socialism that anyone can call anybody the word. It has all the clarity of saying "he's bad" or "he's not nice"—the point of it is to condemn, but the term's so vague and abstract now that it has no meaning. When it comes from the right it has no more meaning than that Obama is someone who believes the government has an important role to play in economic life. It's verbal emptiness, a way to get others to think badly about somebody you don't like.

Certainly, Obama has never claimed to be—nor has he done anything to qualify him as—a socialist by any definition. It's gibberish.

Q: With power increasingly in the hands of CEOs, there is still a myth that shareholders control corporations.

Wolff: You're correct, but what you're referring to is a "formal right," but not a "substantive right." Yes, you can buy a share of stock but that doesn't have any real meaning for a corporation because a tiny segment of U.S. shareholders owns a huge portion of all the shares. Participating in shareholding in any significant way is not something most people in capitalist societies have ever, in fact, been able to do.

In most capitalist enterprises, and certainly most major corporations that dominate capitalist economies, the organi-

zation of work is highly stratified. At the top are the major shareholders, typically ten to twenty people who own major blocks of shares in the company. Because of that, they have the voting power of all those shares and that gives them the authority under the law to select the board of directors, between fifteen and twenty people.

Together, the major shareholders and the board, thirty to forty people, make all of the decisive decisions in a corporation: What the company will produce, how, where, and, finally, what to do with the profit the enterprise generates. The vast majority of workers in a capitalist enterprise are required to live with the results of all of the decisions that are made by a tiny minority.

Q: What's the alternative?

Wolff: A cooperative enterprise is the key alternative to a traditional capitalist enterprise. All the workers, whatever they do inside an enterprise, have to be able to participate in collectively arriving at the decisions about what, how, where to produce, and what to do with the profits in a democratic way. One person, one vote should decide how these things are done.

The reason why we're interested in making a transition from the top-down capitalist organization of enterprises to a radically different cooperative or democratic organization is simple: We believe the capitalist organization of production has now finished its period of usefulness in human history. It is now no longer able to deliver the goods.

It's bringing profits and prosperity to a tiny portion of the population, and delivering not the goods but the "bads" to most people. Jobs are steadily more insecure, unemployment is high and lastingly high, benefits are increasingly being reduced, and the prospects for our children are even worse, as more of them go deeper and deeper in debt to get the degrees that do not provide them with the jobs and incomes to get out of that debt.

The crisis we endure is the product of an economic system whose organization is something we should question, debate, and change.

Q: What is your definition of a cooperative and of a collective?

Wolff: The word "cooperative," to define a business, is very old. Cooperatives have existed for many centuries, all around the world, as well as throughout the history of the United States. It means a variety of things.

Sometimes, cooperative means that a group of producers who make something will get together and share—cooperatively own—one of their inputs. For example: A group of

farmers, none of whom individually has enough money to buy the land they need to work, can sometimes form a cooperative so that they pool their money and then they can collectively afford to buy land. They agree to farm different portions of the land but to own the land cooperatively.

Another example is in winemaking. Around the world, particularly in Europe, it's very common for wines to be produced and sold by a co-operative.

The actual growing of the grapes and making of the wine is done by individual farmers, with or without employees. The word "co-op" doesn't apply here to the actual work being done, but the farmers get together and literally pool their wine. They pour the wine each of them has produced in their vats into one central vat and then cooperate to sell it. They can do better selling wine in larger

quantities to larger buyers than they could doing it by themselves. This is sometimes called a marketing or sales co-op.

The word "collective" is not so often used because it has been basically used by socialists and communists and has a different history. The word "cooperative"—as I'm interested in it, and as people now in the United States and other parts of the world are becoming more interested by the day—means the workplace itself is organized cooperatively, rather than in the conventional capitalistic, hierarchical form.

Q: What are some examples of U.S. cooperatives?

Wolff: We've produced a website where a whole host of examples are given: www.democracyatwork.info. The Arizmendi Bakeries provide one example. There are five of them all linked together in one parent corporation, located in the Bay Area. They're completely run by the workers—those who bake the bread and pastries, make the coffee, do the buying, maintain the premises, et cetera.

On many days, they do the specific tasks in the division of labor they've created for themselves. But then periodically all of the workers get together and they don't do their particular task. Instead, they collectively discuss and debate what to produce, how to produce, where to produce, whether to expand,

and so on. Those decisions are decided in a democratic way.

There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of these worker co-ops or producer co-ops. Many companies, including famous names like Apple computers, if you go back and look at the early days you may be surprised to find out that they were co-ops. The original founders were often workers dissatisfied by being mere employees in somebody's company, so they got together with others, often at young ages, and pooled their enthusiasm and energy and set up a different kind of enterprise. This is very common in Silicon Valley.

Every year, hundreds—in some years thousands—of engineers quit their jobs in big companies like IBM, Oracle, or Cisco, and get together with friends and say: "OK, we want to start a different kind of business. We're all going to take our laptops and gather at Harry's ga-

rage, and we don't want to come to work every day in a suit and tie or for some executive who doesn't understand anything about computers telling us what to do. We don't want any of the rigmarole; it's stifling, it kills our creativity. We'd like to go to a place where there are no bosses, where we're all equal."

And that's what they've done. And in many cases they've been very strict: All decisions have to be made by consensus. Everybody is equal.

Nothing would more quickly and definitively reduce U.S. income inequality than allowing every worker in all businesses to participate in deciding the range of incomes from one worker to another. They would never do what is now a matter of normality: give one person millions, in some cases billions, while others have barely enough to make a living.

In America, we debate everything except capitalism. If there's an institution in your society that's above criticism, you're giving it a free pass to indulge all of its weaknesses and darker tendencies.

An honest, healthy society would never shrink away from debating where we're at with capitalism. Can we do better? How might that work?

Moving to a cooperatively organized enterprise is one of the best ways to really do something about unequal distribution of wealth. ♦

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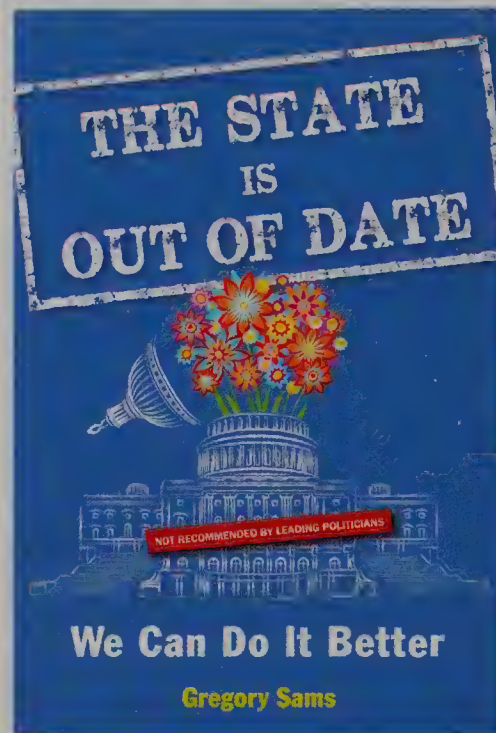
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By Ed Rampell

Cesar Chavez, the Movie



It's still early in the year, but *Cesar Chavez* may very well be 2014's best progressive feature.

Chavez focuses on the heyday of the United Farm Workers during the 1960s and 1970s. With an epic sweep, the movie follows Chavez (Michael Peña), wife Helen (America Ferrera), and UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta (Rosario Dawson) as they organize in California's lettuce fields and vineyards. With intermittent use of archival footage but mostly through staged reenactments, director Diego Luna skillfully depicts the heroic struggle of farm workers, mostly of Mexican and Filipino ancestry.

Led by the indomitable Chavez, they go on strike, make a 300-mile pilgrimage on foot to the state capital of Sacramento, and launch the famous grape boycott. Chavez fasts

MICHAEL PEÑA AS CESAR CHAVEZ

L.A.-based film historian/critic Ed Rampell is The Progressive's "Man in Hollywood." The new book Rampell co-authored, "The Hawaii Movie and Television Book," is published by Honolulu's Mutual Publishing (<http://hawaiimtvbook.weebly.com>).

for twenty-five days, as the *campesinos* confront the growers led by Bogdanovich, a son-of-a-bitch played by John Malkovich. California Governor Ronald Reagan is glimpsed and heard in news clips denouncing the strikers, who are repeatedly rebaited.

When the laborers' nonviolent movement for equal rights, fair working conditions, and better wages hits an impasse, an outraged Senator Bobby Kennedy (Jack Holmes), his eyes on the prize of the Presidency, rallies to their cause and shines the media spotlight on the embattled Chavez and the impoverished toilers. At a public hearing, RFK lets loose a fiery denunciation of the owners. Bobby then meets with Chavez, who is near death from his Gandhian hunger strike.

The movie shows RFK winning the California primary, only to be assassinated moments later.

Richard Nixon (seen via film clips) takes the White House and proceeds to conspire with the growers to break the farm workers' strike and boycott. But Chavez and the farm workers ultimately prevail, as Chavez triumphantly declares: "*Si se puede!*"

Luna's well-directed film has a pseudo-documentary, neorealist style. It depicts a sharp dispute between militants and the pacifist Chavez, a vegan who insisted, like his civil rights compatriot Martin Luther King, upon nonviolent

resistance and civil disobedience. In one dreamlike sequence, the audience watches the fasting Chavez take his spiritual path.

But the film does not portray Chavez as a flawless saint. His strained relationship with his own son is central to the drama, and shown to be the price activists pay for devoting themselves body and soul to the cause.

The feature ends with footage of the actual Cesar Chavez making a profound statement about poverty, which remains extremely powerful, and, unfortunately,

and labor leader: Michael Peña is the son of Mexican farm workers who were undocumented immigrants when they entered America and were deported twice.

His parents "grew up in a very poor area of Mexico, near San Luis Potosi. The town even now has only one telephone," Peña, who was born and raised in Chicago, says. "That's why I'm very close to the story. They were both farm workers. My dad worked from age eight to about twenty-five in the fields. They came across illegally twice, because they

got deported. They had me and my brother stay in the States and paid a couple to take care of us for six months until they could get enough money to come back over. It was tough. My mother's not with us any more, but to see this small, delicate woman having to cross the border twice, it's hard to even



still pertinent. The movie's focus on a unionization drive among a marginalized group (1930s New Deal pro-labor legislation excluded the farm workers, who were mostly nonwhites) is also, alas, very timely, as fast food workers, Walmart employees, and other low-wage earners fight to become organized today.

The star of the new *Cesar Chavez* biopic is uniquely qualified to depict the legendary civil rights

imagine."

"As an actor you always want to find a way in," Peña says about his preparation for playing Cesar Chavez. "I basically started listening to his speeches. Then I started memorizing his speeches. Then I actually started talking like him a little bit, especially his cadence."

Peña proceeded to mimic Chavez's voice, with pauses, adding, "I'd walk around [speaking] like Cesar Chavez for weeks on end, without telling people what I'm doing, so I wouldn't feel like a

fraud. And just did it until I could just easily bring it up whenever I wanted to.”

Peña got his first major big screen break in Oliver Stone’s *World Trade Center*. “Michael Peña was a very astute and caring actor to work with,” says Stone.

His astuteness extends to the realm of politics.

“For some reason, a lot of problems we have today are old issues just covered up in different ways,” Peña says. “Wherever anyone is trying to make a buck, there’s a small percentage of people trying to cheat those people out of that buck. It happened a couple of years ago with all these big companies stealing from the little man, and then the government bailing out these guys. Once they were bailed out, the top executives give themselves bonuses. Who gives themselves bonuses when your statistics are down? You were literally going

bankrupt and you’re going to give yourself a bonus?”

America Ferrera, who won a Golden Globe portraying the Puerto Rican Betty Suarez in ABC’s 2006-2010 *Ugly Betty* series, plays Cesar’s beautiful wife, Helen. A glammed down Rosario Dawson—known for playing steamy beauties in films such as Oliver Stone’s 2004 *Alexander* and 2005’s *Rent*—portrays UFW icon Dolores Huerta.

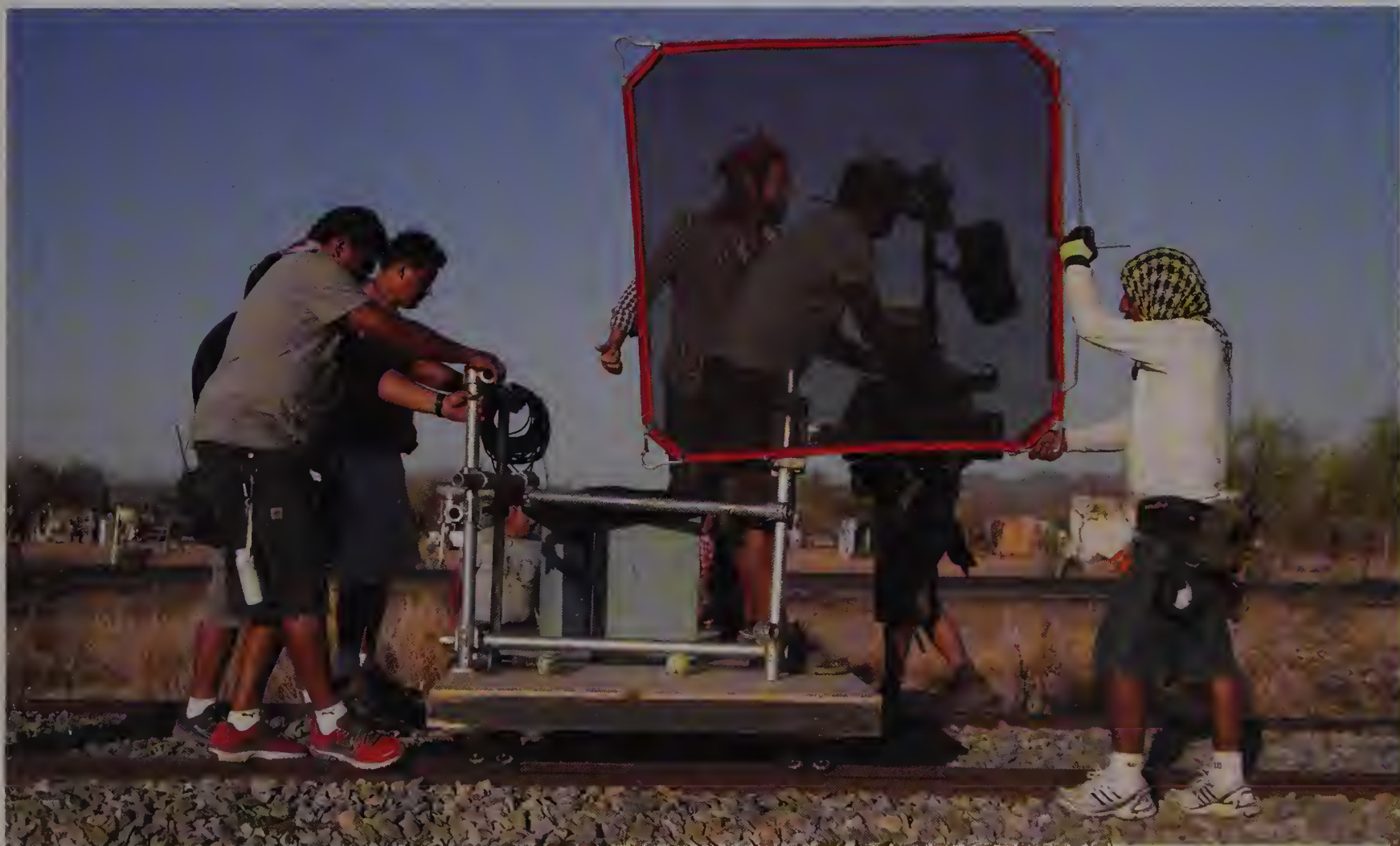
Defying the celluloid stereotypes of Latinas, Ferrera’s and Dawson’s characters, like the Hispanic women in 1954’s *Salt of the Earth*, are depicted as being at the forefront of the struggle. In one dramatic scene reminiscent of the pro-union classic *Norma Rae*, Ferrera’s Helen boldly defies the growers and their handpicked police by vociferously urging pickers to “*Huelga!*” (“Strike!”)

John Malkovich does a villainous turn as Chavez’s archenemy.

Cesar Chavez was directed on location in Sonora by the Mexican actor/director Diego Luna, who has appeared in great movies such as *Y Tu Mama Tambien* and *Milk*. With its heartfelt, epic sweep, *Cesar Chavez*, which was co-written by Keir Pearson and Timothy Sexton, ranks alongside *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* as one of the best progressive biopics of our time.

This feature, as well as the documentary *Cesar’s Last Fast*, by Lorena Parlee and Richard Ray Perez, whose father was in the UFW, will help contemporary audiences remember an important part of labor and Chicano history.

Cesar Chavez is set to open on March 28, what would have been the weekend of the labor leader’s eighty-seventh birthday. ♦



DIRECTOR DIEGO LUNA (CENTER, IN RED BANDANA) ON THE SET OF THE NEW CESAR CHAVEZ FILM.

Comedy's Crass Ceiling



For more than thirty years I have been a comedy practitioner, and for more than forty years I have been a student of late night comedy. From *Tonight* to *Late Night*

to *The Late Late Show*, and from the big three networks to cable channels, I can trace the lineages: from Jimmy Kimmel, Jimmy Fallon, and Seth Meyers back through Jay Leno and David Letterman (the fighting Cain and Abel brothers), back to Johnny Carson, who reworked Dick Cavett and Jack Paar. I have followed comedy family tree offshoots, such as Craig Ferguson and Conan O'Brien. Now as an older adult learner who thinks 10 p.m. is pushing it, I am especially grateful for the timely refinements of TiVo, Hulu, and YouTube.

Of course, I have happily followed the career trajectories of Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert on Comedy Central, and Bill Maher on HBO, but they're on cable, and the networks' belief that network late night is superior to cable still abides. For now.

For five decades, the late night show memes of desk, fake microphone, monologue, interview, and musical or animal guest have basically remained the same. The sixth meme, the white

man, has also held sway. Joan Rivers, Paula Poundstone, Wanda Sykes, Whoopi Goldberg—all tried and failed. Chelsea Handler has slyly repurposed the word "late" with her evening show, *Chelsea Lately*, but, again, it's on cable.

The latest crop of comics, Fallon and Meyers, were welcomed to their new night jobs with Olympic coverage that made them more viral than Bob Costas's pink eyes. They are next gen, less offspring of Johnny Carson and more

netic, that testosterone is for nighttime use and estrogen is for daytime use.

Ellen DeGeneres is a huge afternoon success. Generally, though, a single daytime dose of estrogen is not perceived to be as powerful as the night-T, so women are often clumped into groups around a table, if they can find one not occupied by Charlie Rose.

Women are allowed to be award show hosts. Amy Poehler, Tina Fey, and Ellen DeGeneres have proven themselves hilarious mistresses of the one-night stand.

The poet/activist June Jordan once observed that whoever has the power determines the point of view. For now, Lorne Michaels has the power, and he determines what's funny. Given that for years he could not find and nurture a funny black woman for the *SNL* roster, even recently during five years of Michelle Obama comedy possibilities, I don't much expect much change.

In sampling women's reactions to the new late show recruits from the *SNL* farm team, I have noticed more sighing resignation than Guerrilla Grrrl fury. They know eventually a woman will get the nod, probably after everyone has turned from networks to binge streaming Netflix. As women comics take the leap making and starring in their own movies, running sitcoms, and doing their own daytime shows, they seem to be saying, "Who would want that job?"

And who am I to argue? ♦



spawn of Lorne Michaels. The *SNL* creator and comedy impresario is now the fountainhead from whence all comedy flows.

Many women's studies majors have theorized about this failure to break through what they dub "the crass ceiling." That phrase inadvertently proves that women's study majors have a sense of humor, however slight. My theory refines theirs. I think the dominance of men on late night has something to do with an unwritten code, possibly ge-

Kate "Lumosity Grad" Clinton is a humorist.

Derek Jeter, Marketer's Dream



This baseball season, we are faced with the prospect of the last year of New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter. When Jeter first put on a Yan-

kees uniform, the world was a profoundly different place.

As Jeter was leading the Yankees to the 1996 World Series championship while winning the rookie of the year award, we were still reading newspapers. We still wrote letters. And only Gordon Gekko had a cell phone. As for Jeter, he played in Yankee Stadium, which at the time had yet to be bulldozed and was still the baseball cathedral where Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, and Mantle once performed their exploits.

Receding hairline aside, the thirty-nine-year-old Jeter still looks exactly like his twenty-one-year-old self. In a chemically addled era, he was never accused or even suspected of taking performance-enhancing drugs. His body never ballooned with steroids. His injuries never healed with suspicious quickness. In fact, in our age of hypercynical fandom, Jeter may be the only person who would shock us if he was revealed to have sought a

chemical edge. All Jeter did, throughout the years, was compile hits and play solid shortstop. He is a first ballot Hall of Famer with five World Series rings, and the only thing really debatable about him is the quality of his defense.

Maybe it was his matinee good looks or perhaps it was the icon-

reason as well. The Yankees captain was part of a wave of multicultural neoliberal sports heroes: handsome, multiracial, purposefully uncontroversial. He and his cohorts—Alex Rodriguez, Nomar Garciaparra, and Tiger Woods—sought to create an image of postracial harmony for marketing purposes. They

would never be surly like Barry Bonds. They would be cutting edge without the controversy. They would be throwbacks with a patina of rebellion, albeit stripped of all conceivable political content.

Yet one by one these idols proved to be unable to hold onto the roles assigned to them.

Garciaparra pumped up and then his body failed him, ineffective and banished from Boston before the Red Sox ended their “curse” in 2004.

Woods became a national joke, apologizing over a publicly broken marriage that gave fodder to the tabloids.

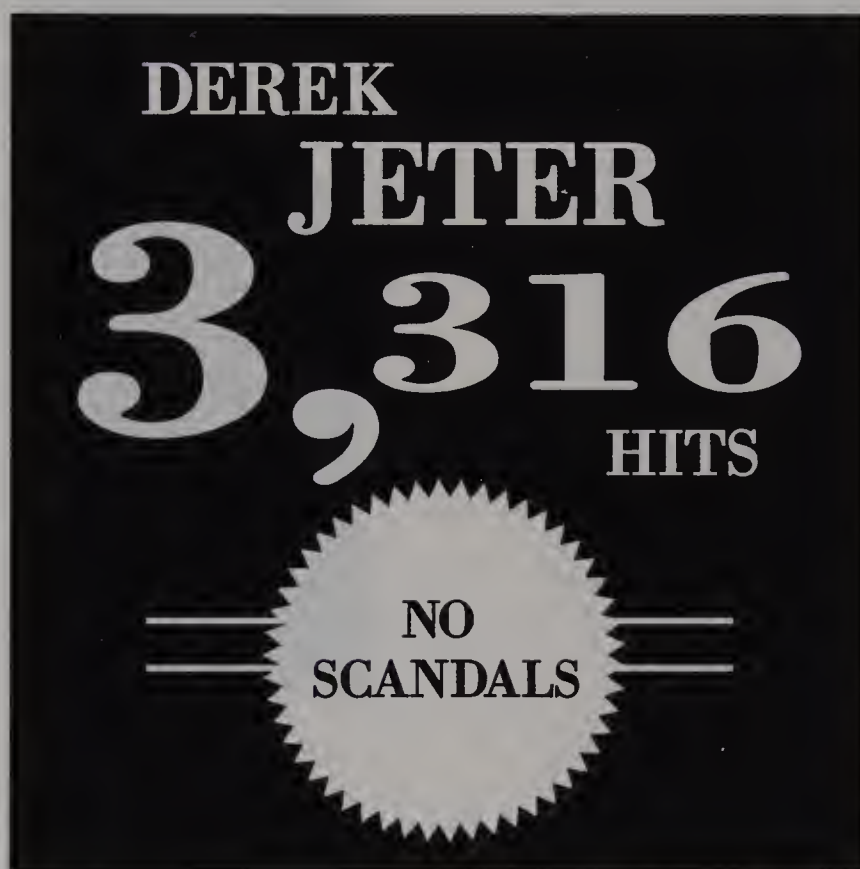
A-Rod proved to be hilarious tragedy or tragic comedy, a man with Hall

of Fame stats who won't make the Hall of Fame and will instead be remembered as receiving the longest steroid suspension in the sport's history.

Only Jeter was able to live the dream. In the twenty-first century, only Derek Jeter has been able to conquer the fame paradox laid out in *The Dark Knight* of “die a hero or live long enough to see yourself become the villain.”

That is why the largely male sports media adores him so. He lives their fantasy.

If only he had used his fame to do more about his fans' reality. ♦



ic Yankee pinstripes, but no one has ever been afforded a benefit of the doubt on every front like Derek Jeter.

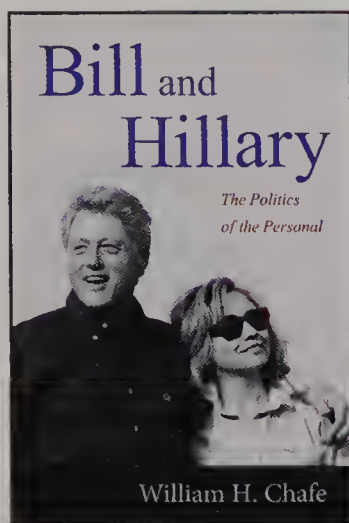
I once interviewed a Hall of Fame voter who was explaining to me why he would never vote for longtime Houston Astros second baseman Craig Biggio, who never failed a steroid test, because he was “of that era.” I asked whether he would vote for Jeter and he said simply, “Jeter was different.”

On the field, Jeter was certainly different.

He now stands alone for a different

Dave Zirin is the host of Sirius XM Radio's popular weekly show, "Edge of Sports Radio," and the sports editor for The Nation magazine. His newest book is "Game Over: How Politics Has Turned the Sports World Upside Down" (The New Press).

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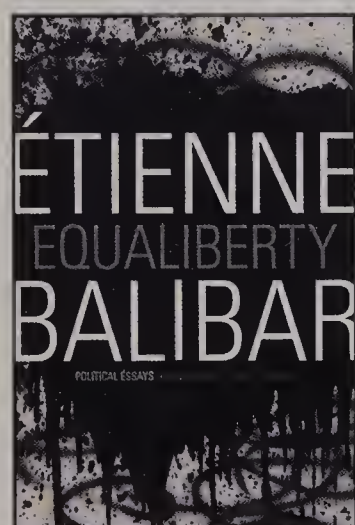
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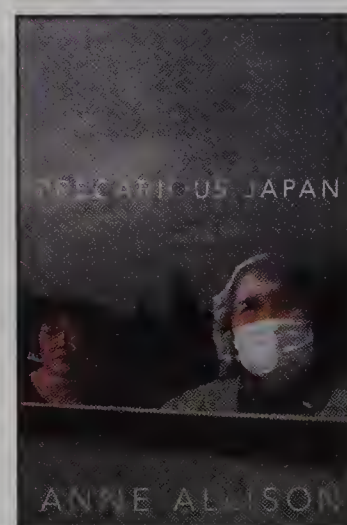
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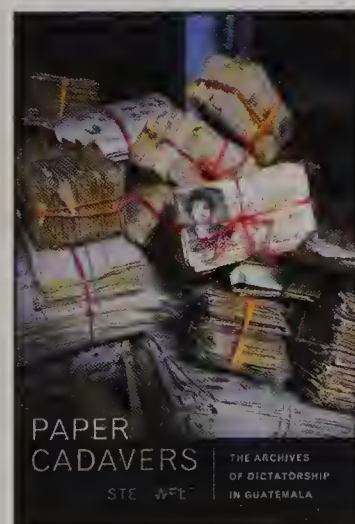
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III.

Though his tenure on the earth
is that of a blade of grass,
though his acquaintance among the dead
increases year by year
and, like many grown old
before, he lives from the loss
of one beloved companion
to the loss of yet another,
the old man prays to find,
at the end of his own leash,
his love for the world at hand,
his heart at rest in gratitude.

Still, his old nightmares
return. He dreams of permanent
destruction, his country broken,
its woodlands felled, its streams
poisoned. The future deviling
in his mind, his life shattered
and strewn in the public way,
his dreams recall the night
of Gethsemane, the fear
that the end of the way taken
is not to die merely,
but to die forsaken, the heart
finally broken.

From this
despair he asks to be
remade, set free, let go
if only into the sanity of grief,
if only to suffer the suffering
of old companions he has loved
and loves. Sometimes his love
returns, finds him in his dream,
and leads him home.

XIII.

The eastern sky at evening
curves down from blue to white
to hilltops across the river.
Nearer, a few treetops
are sunbright among the trees
in shadow. The moment is clear
as water, still as stone.
As it is, nobody could paint it,
nor I describe or remember it.
A photograph might keep
its lights and shades, its colors
maybe, but not the air,
the breath by which it lives,
visible only fleetly
in the eyes' living light,
and in an eyewink changed.
Surely its quickly passing
perfects forever its beauty.
And so again the mortal
has fallen short of the real.

—Wendell Berry

Muslim Girl Superhero

Ms. Marvel Series

By G. Willow Wilson

Marvel Comics. 32 pages each. \$11.

By Meher Ahmad

I read *The Joy Luck Club* when I was in fourth grade, perhaps a little too early to begin confronting my immigrant identity, but it was my first exposure to an entire genre of immigrant experiences. It was a good place to start because I suddenly realized I wasn't the first to have a dotting immigrant mother attempting to make me into her own image of success. My mom didn't try to persuade me into becoming a chess star for bragging rights like Waverly Jong, but she did try to fashion me into a mathlete, a task which I inevitably failed to accomplish.

The story of the new Ms. Marvel, Kamala Khan, isn't so different from mine. She, too, has a dotting mother and a concerned father praying for her to choose a career in medicine. That isn't so much an immigrant story as the American teenage story. Kamala is struggling to define her sense of self, all the while brooding and quarrelling with her parents.

But Kamala's character, gifted with the superpower of shape shifting, isn't just another American teen. She's Marvel's attempt at introducing its readers to an American Muslim Teen.

Major plotlines in Kamala's comic series are dedicated to her struggle with her Muslim faith. I can relate. I grappled with Islam's cultural expectations around the same age as Kamala's sixteen-year-old self. But I cringe a bit at the gee-whiz presentation of the Muslim immigrant experience, which seems intended for a white audience that will find Kamala's cultural background exotic.

There is the familiar immigrant narrative line: a dotting mother, a distant but hard-working patriarch, one sibling that

Meher Ahmad is a journalist and documentary film associate producer based in Brooklyn.



clings to tradition and another that rebels. Marvel has been applauded by virtually all media coverage of Kamala Khan for introducing a Muslim superhero. But the cookie-cutter immigrant story here is not so revolutionary.

That said, it is refreshing to have a superhero that is so like myself in the pages of one of the biggest superhero comics in the world.

Pakistanis are rarely introduced in popular media in any form except as a member of your friendly terrorist cell next door a la 24. There aren't any Pakistani teens in *Modern Family*, on the Disney Channel, or in the *Twilight* series. Kamala is one of the first to break into popular culture from our country—and as a superhero at that.

There's no doubt that Marvel has taken a big step creating a character from a demographic that is largely ignored in popular media.

The Kamala Khan series was written by G. Willow Wilson, a comic writer

and journalist who also happens to be a Muslim convert. Wilson has written a number of books and articles that relate to a Muslim experience.

The subplot Wilson gave Kamala's character is her struggle with her Mus-

lim faith. It's not often that a Marvel character questions his or her religious identity. Many question the presence of God and the moral implications of their actions. Wolverine once even requested last rites from a Catholic priest for someone who was dying in his arms. But no one questions the very basis for a religion in the way Kamala does.

Wilson's reasons for adding a subplot about Kamala's difficulties with her Muslim religion were surely well intended. It allows readers to acquaint themselves with the religion through an informal internal dialogue.

It's great that the series delves into specifics about Islam and portrays a Muslim girl wearing something other than a veil, as Marvel's only other Muslim superhero, Dust, a side character unlike Kamala, does. Dust is an Afghan superhero, and sports an oddly tight-fitting abaya, one that simultaneously accentuates her curvy figure while masking her face, making her character a wildly offensive caricature of the mysterious-yet-sexy veiled woman.

The problem, though, is that in order for Kamala to be portrayed as a Muslim superhero, her religion has to be made palatable for the American reader.

Leaving her faith as merely a subidentity, as with any other Marvel character, won't do. She's Marvel's first Muslim American lead, and it seems one can't be Muslim in America, fictional or not, without questioning the religion's legitimacy or struggling with some sort of internal crisis regarding the faith.

It would be more realistic—albeit less exotic—if Kamala took Islam for granted, as so many Muslim Americans do.

I'm still waiting for the fictional Muslim American girl who reflects everyday reality, even if it means giving up some cool superpowers. ♦



Poor Jamie Dimon



Assume that you ran a business that was found guilty of bribery, forgery, perjury, defrauding homeowners, fleecing

investors, swindling consumers, cheating credit card holders, violating U.S. trade laws, and bilking American soldiers. Can you even imagine the kind of punishment you'd get?

How about zero? Nada. Nothing. Zilch. No jail time. Plus, you still get to stay on as boss, you get to keep all the loot you gained from the crime spree, and you even get an \$8.5 million pay raise!

Of course, you and I would never get such outrageous, absurd, kid-glove pampering by legal authorities. But, then, we're not the capo of JPMorgan Chase, America's biggest bank and a crime syndicate that apparently is too big to jail.

Jamie Dimon is the slick, vainglorious, silver-haired boss of the JPMorgan house of banksters. This CEO has fostered a culture of thievery during his years at JPMorgan. Yet, federal prosecutors have bowed to the politically connected Wall Streeter, refusing to ruffle his feathers with even a single criminal charge.

Jim Hightower produces The Hightower Lowdown newsletter and is the author, with Susan DeMarco, of "Swim Against the Current: Even a Dead Fish Can Go with the Flow."

Meanwhile, one of the scams that Dimon directly supervised produced a \$6 billion loss for shareholders in 2012. And his reign of mismanagement and illegalities cost the bank's shareholders another \$20 billion in federal fines last year, resulting in a 16 percent drop in profits. You might think the bank's board of directors would at least slap Dimon's wrist for the loss, but no. In

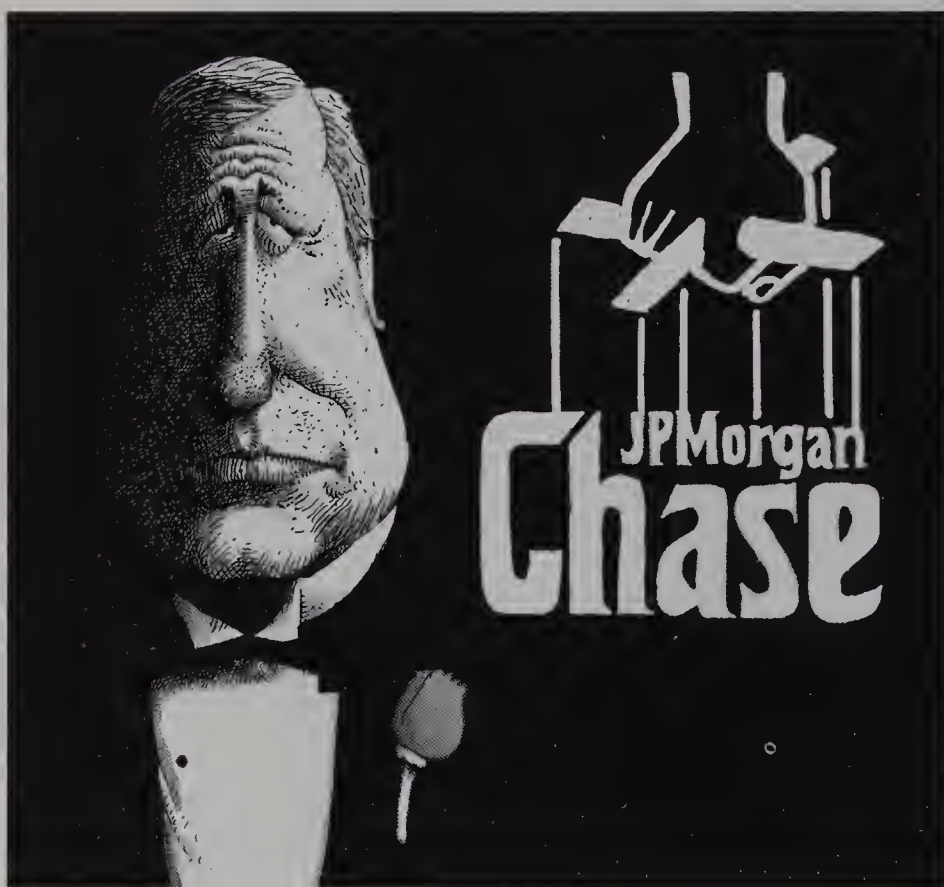
ing by defrauding millions of homeowners, customers, investors, and taxpayers, and then, when caught, they wonder why we don't love them.

That's "funny" as in bizarre, not as in ha-ha.

After racking up a record level of regulatory fines for his recidivist criminal operation, Dimon might have done himself good by a little self-reproachment. Instead, he's been running a feel-sorry-for-me campaign, claiming that he's the victim of this sordid story!

Dimon wails that everything from Wall Street's bailout to the pay of top bank executives has made people envious of bankers' success. Thus, he moans, an anti-Wall Street sentiment has spread through the public, prompting politicians and regulators to pander to this populist anger by demonizing bankers like him.

He called the whole thing "unfair."



JEM SULLIVAN

January, they rewarded him, raising his pay by some 70 percent to a sweet \$20 million!

The New York Times noted that "to ordinary Americans" such a reward for poor performance "may seem curious."

Curious?

Try incomprehensible, insane, and immoral.

That's the funny thing about Wall Street banksters: They make a kill-

Good grief. This guy builds bank profits through ripoffs, piles billions of dollars in fines on the backs of shareholders, pockets \$20 million in personal pay for one year's work—and he wants us to weep for him?

Being a Wall Street boss means never having to say you're sorry, for it's always someone else's fault.

Wall Street's haughty elites continue to demonstrate that they're common mobsters—only not so ethical or self-reflective. ♦

Is It the Fountain of Youth for Aging Minds? Pharmacist of the Year Makes Memory Discovery of a Lifetime

'America's Pharmacist,' Dr. Gene Steiner, finds what he and his patients have been looking for – a real memory pill!

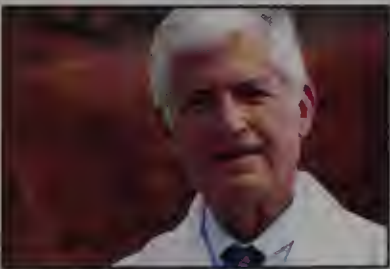


For years, pharmacists told disappointed patients that memory loss was inevitable. A new, drug-free cognitive formula may help improve mind, mood, and memory in as little as 30 days.

PHOENIX, ARIZONA —

If Pharmacist of the Year, Dr. Gene Steiner, had a nickel for every time someone leaned over the counter and whispered, "Do you have anything that can improve my memory," he would be a rich man today.

It's a question he's heard countless times in his 45-year career. He has seen families torn apart by the anguish of memory loss and mental decline, a silent condition that threatens the independent lifestyle that seniors hold so dearly.



Pharmacist of the Year, Dr. Gene Steiner, PharmD, was so impressed with his newfound memory powers that he recommended the patented, prescription-free memory formula to his pharmacy patients with great success.

In his years-long search for a drug or nutrient that could slow mental decline, he finally found the answer, a natural, drug-free compound that helps aging brains 'think and react,' younger.

Tired Brains Snap Awake!

"It helps tired, forgetful brains to 'snap awake,'" says Dr. Steiner.

Before Dr. Steiner recommended it to customers, he tried it first. "Within a few days, I can tell you without reservation that my memory became crystal clear!"

"Speaking for pharmacists everywhere, we finally have something that we can recommend that is safe and effective. And you don't need a prescription either!"

Feeding an Older Brain

The formula helps oxygenate listless brain cells to revitalize and protect them from free radicals caused by stress and toxins.

It also helps restore depleted neurotransmitter levels, while feeding the aging mind with brain-specific nutrients and protective antioxidants.

"I had such marvelous results with this memory pill that I not only started recommending it to my customers, I even shared it with other physicians!"

Pharmacy Best-Seller

"It became the best-selling brain health product in my pharmacy and customers were returning to thank

me for introducing them to it."

Users like Selwyn Howell* agree. He credits the memory compound with bolstering his confidence.

"It helped me speak out more than I used to. I am growing more confident every day."

Carey S.* reports, "I feel so much more focused and with the new energy I'm now ready to tackle the things I've been putting off for years!"

Elizabeth K.* of Rochester, New York experienced a night-and-day difference in her mind and memory. At the age of 54, her memory was declining at an

"alarming rate."

"I was about to consult a neurologist when I read a newspaper article about it."

"It took about a month for the memory benefit to kick in. Six months later, even my husband was impressed with my improved memory. And I am very happy with my renewed mental clarity and focus!"

"I highly recommend it," says Dr. Steiner. "This drug-free compound is the perfect supplement for increasing one's brain power. If it worked for me, it can work for you!"

Rx

*2-3 capsules per day
for faster recall
& more brainpower!*

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When you call the toll-free number below, ask how you can also receive a free copy of the medically acclaimed book, *20/20 Brainpower: 20 Days to a Quicker, Calmer, Sharper Mind!* It's a \$20 value, yours free! But don't wait, supplies are limited!

Free Brain Detox Formula, Too!

Be one of the first 500 callers, and you can also receive a free supply of the brain detox formula that is scientifically designed to help increase mental clarity and focus even further by helping flush away toxins in the brain. Call now while supplies last!

Call Toll-Free! 1-800-646-0090

SIGNATURE: *Dr. Gene Steiner*

DATE:

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA.

This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Everyone is different and you may not experience the same results. Results can depend on a variety of factors including overall health, diet, and other lifestyle factors.



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